The PLAYERS GUIDE to THOSE 'CUTE' GAMES

electronic GAMES

Videogames · Computer Games · Stand-Alone Games · Arcades

DELL 04114

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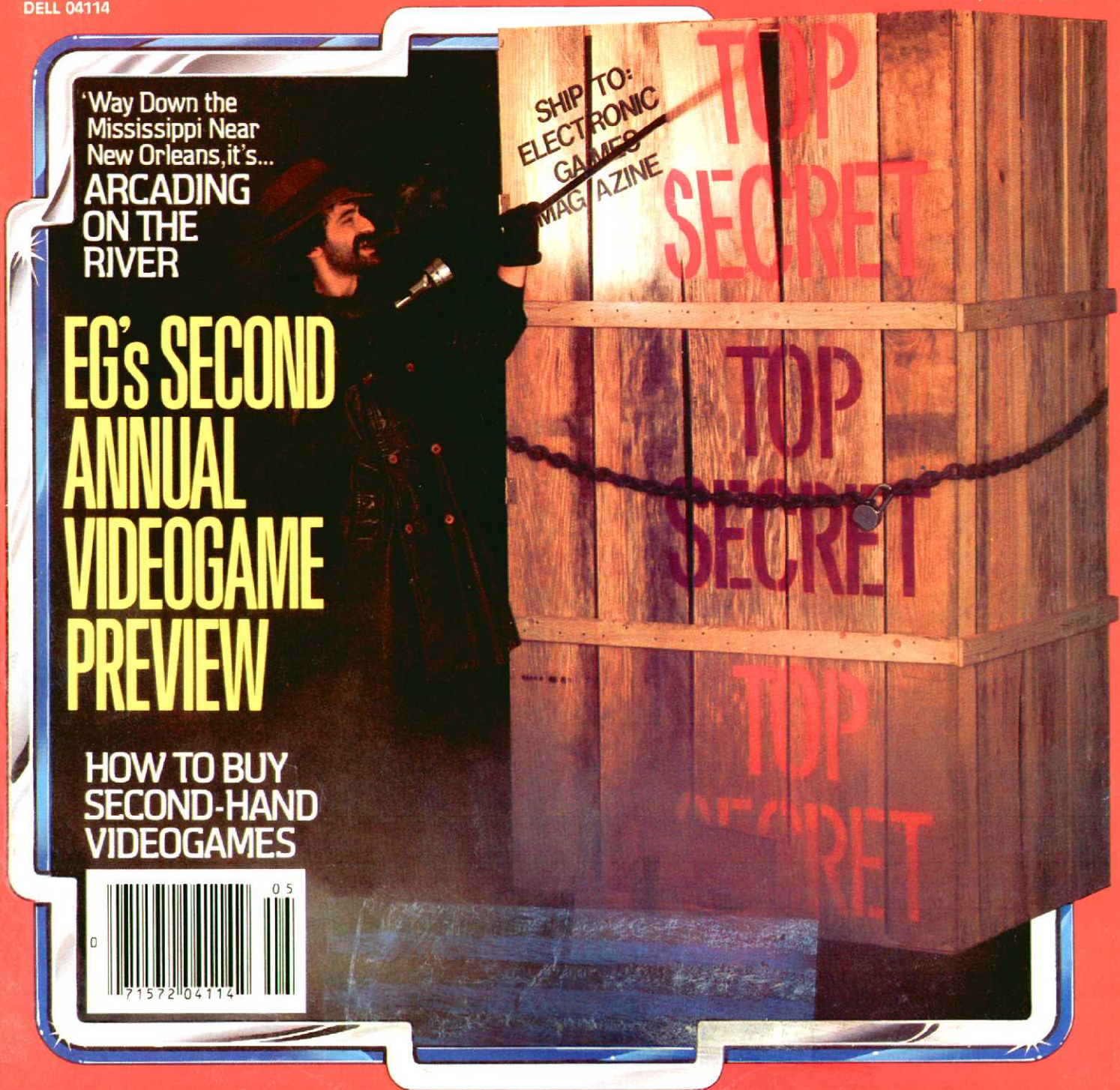

'Way Down the Mississippi Near New Orleans, it's...
ARCADING ON THE RIVER

EG's SECOND ANNUAL VIDEOGAME PREVIEW

HOW TO BUY SECOND-HAND VIDEOGAMES

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INTRODUCING TAC-SCAN. TH
FROM THE ARCADE EXPER

E FIRST HOME VIDEO GAME 'S AT SEGA.

Your **Tac-Scan**™ squadron is streaking across the galaxy at mach 24, and you're suddenly confronted by the deadly superfleet from Ahm.

The glare of laser cannons pierces the darkness. Explosions fill the void. Wave after wave of Ahmins hurl themselves into combat. Only lightning-fast reflexes and brilliant strategy can save you now.

Tac-Scan isn't just another video game. It's the first video game that gives you absolute command of your own starfighter wing. The first that gives you the fire-power of over 600 rounds a minute. The first that gives you strategic control over when to call up reinforcements.

Tac-Scan. The first home video game produced by Sega, the Arcade Experts. Creators of **Zaxxon**,™ **Frogger**™ and **Turbo**.™ And watch for Sega's amazing new **Sub-Scan**.™ A battle of wits on the high seas between the hunter above and the hunted below.

Tac-Scan and **Sub-Scan.** The first home video games from the Arcade Experts at Sega. For the Atari 2600 and Sears Video Arcade systems. Now playing at a store near you.

SEGA

THE ARCADE EXPERTS.

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electronic GAMES

FEATURES

A new generation of home videogames is now on the way to the nation's retail stores. Included are some real gems. Find out which games you'll be playing over the next 12 months in

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It all started with **Pac-Man**, *but the rage for "cute" home and coin-op videogames show no signs of abating. Read all about them in*

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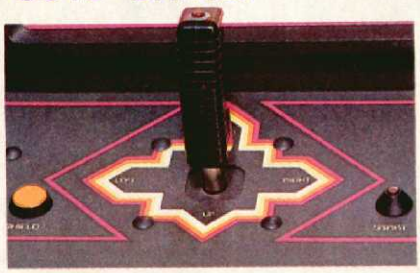

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Can't afford all the new cartridges being promoted by the cornucopia of new software companies? Why not try shopping for

84 SECOND-HAND GAMES

All aboard! Let's sail along the scenic banks of the sprawling Mississippi! It's time for a bit of opulent dockside

92 ARCADING ON THE RIVER

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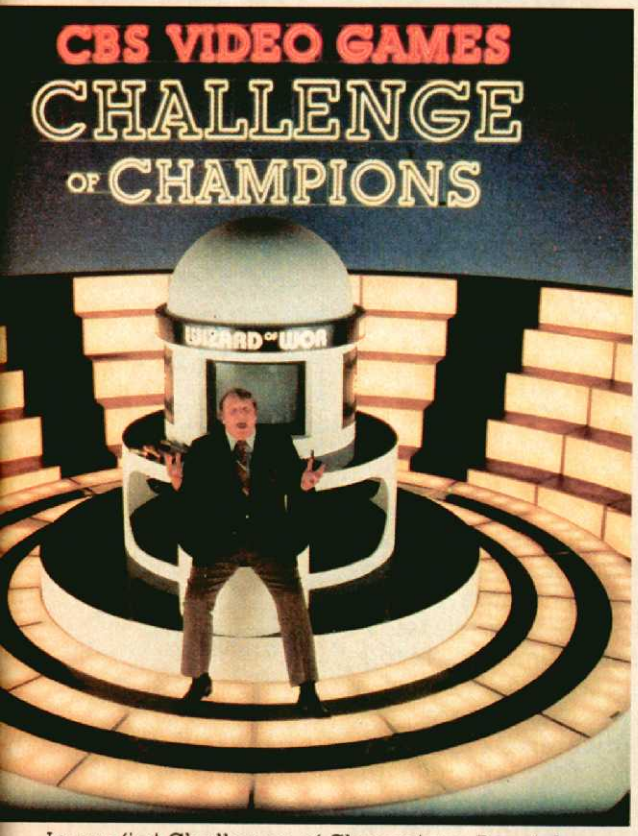
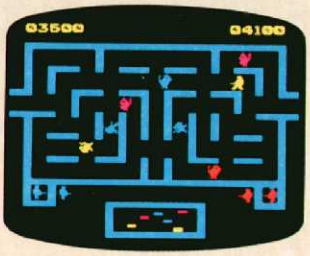
Winning at 'Wizard of Wor' and 'Gorf'. By John Madden.



In our first Challenge of Champions, Ray Johnson of Los Angeles defeated Tony Sarkis of New York and David Hayes, a student at Cal Tech, defeated Brian Anderson, a student at MIT.

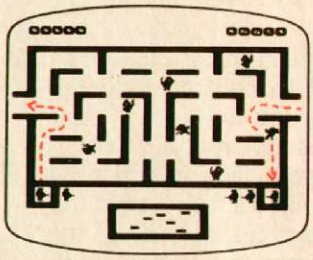
As the sportscaster for CBS Video Games, I get a chance to watch some of the best players in the country in the "Challenge of Champions."

Here are some of their winning strategies.



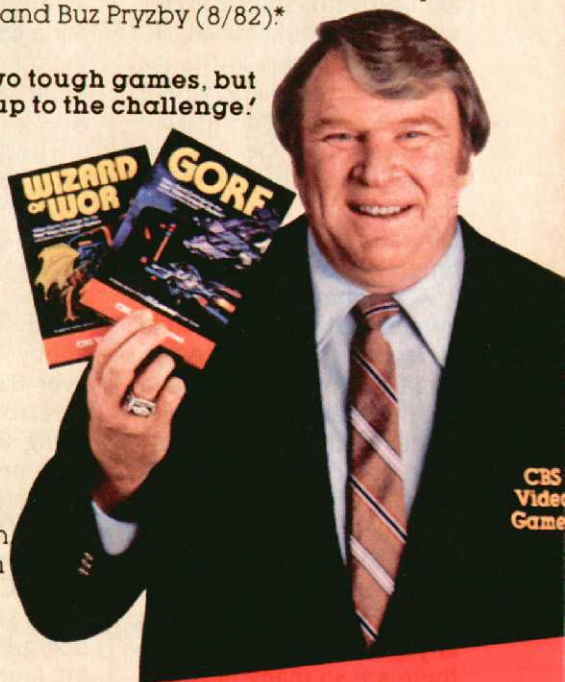
Wizard of Wor™: You start with three worriors. The object of this game is to defeat the Wizard, his henchmen and your opponent. This is a game you can play alone, or two can play simultaneously. When two play, you have to worry about getting zapped by your opponent as well as the Wizard, and his gang.

Here's an interesting move you might want to try. Get out into the maze fast, zip out of the escape door, come back in through the opposite side. If you're quick enough, you'll be in perfect position to blitz your opponent's three worriors before they can score any points. The ultimate shutout.



Another variation is to work together. Make a pact not to hit each other (accidents do happen, of course) and go for the record score: 99,500 by Frank Merollo (10/82) and Buz Pryzby (8/82).*

'These are two tough games, but I know you're up to the challenge.'



Gorf™ is four boards in one game. Your father will enjoy this game because with a little luck, he'll be able to go through the four boards a couple of times, but after the third level it starts to get faster...and faster.

Coaching tips: patience

Stick & move

Get position

Hit it high

That's when you separate the players from the parents. You start out aggressively and after 10,000 points the bombs and torpedoes start to come hot and heavy, so be prepared to change to a defensive game plan.

The record high score is still 32,700 by Horace Eckerstrom (9/82),* which gives you some idea of how hard this game is.

Both Wizard of Wor and Gorf are made for the Atari® 2600 System.™ (Look for Intellivision® versions soon.) They're really tough, and the more you play them, the more you'll like them.

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*High scores as of this printing.

CBS Video Games

Are you up to the challenge?

The Shock of the New

By ARNIE KATZ

As I sit here, barricaded in my Reese Communications office behind impenetrable stacks of press releases and product samples, my mind is still whirling with the sights and sounds of the recent Consumer Electronics Show. This semi-annual event, staged exclusively for manufacturers, retailers and others in the industry, is the place where new hardware and software emerges from behind the locked doors of corporate research and development laboratories for the very first time.

A number of my friends, aware that I was an avid electronic arcader long before Bill Kunkel and I created the first magazine exclusively devoted to this hobby, have asked if my near-constant emersion in the world of battling bytes had led to a jaded attitude. My answer to this question has always been the same: "How can anyone become blase when there are so many new and exciting products entering the market every day?"

The level of excitement maintained throughout five grueling days at this year's Las Vegas CES was almost too much for a frail human mind to control. I floated down the aisles of the Las Vegas Convention Center, my eyes rolling around in my head like a kid on his first trip to the circus, as I viewed the row upon row of displays. It was as close as I've come to a transcendental gaming experience, unless you count the time I actually beat **EG's** famed executive editor at **Air-Sea Battle**.

The main thing I took away from the Consumer Electronics Show, even more important than the knapsack of "sneak preview" games, was a renewed faith in the vitality and viability of this hobby which now fascinates over 80 million Americans. Electronic gaming is *not* going to slip into a rut and bore people to the point of disinterest. Almost all of the manufacturers, including heavyweights like Mattel, Atari, Coleco, Odyssey, Imagic and Activision, are doing everything *but* resting on laurels earned by past achievements. Although some of the smaller, fringe companies are obviously looking to latch onto whatever brief gaming vogue will earn them a quick profit, most of the well-known companies are now readying highly innovative products for immediate release. At the same time, they're forging ahead on the development of still more novel hardware and software items that will help the home arcading hobby make the transition from the present-day stress on videogaming systems to the computer-centered electronic gaming hobby of the future.

Yet the product explosion *does* present gamers with one big problem. As consumers, electronic arcaders will have to be more discriminating than at any previous time when it comes to choosing the products they want from the myriad of possibilities. Rest assured, **Electronic Games** magazine will be there, as we have been since November 1981, to give you the information you need to make those buying decisions intelligently and effectively.

That's probably enough philosophizing for one issue. Now, let's flip those pages and get to all those enticing games!

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May, 1983

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Art Director
Ben Harvey
Graphic Consultants
Creative Concepts

Los Angeles
National Advertising Director
Jim Bender
6215 Rustling Oaks Drive
Agoura, CA 91301
(213) 873-3416
New York
Advertising Manager
Ann Martino
460 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
(212) 947-6500
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1309 North Rand Road
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Advertising Coordinators
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HOW TO BEAT ANY VIDEO GAME SINGLE-HANDED.

WITH THE QUICK-SHOT™ JOYSTICK CONTROLLER

MODEL 318-101

FOR USE ON THE

- ATARI VCS SYSTEM
- SEARS VIDEO ARCADE
- VIC-20 COMPUTER
- ATARI 400 & 800 COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Beating any video game is easy, but beating it single handed takes a lot more. It takes a good joystick that is responsive and comfortable. Now with Spectravision's new Quick-Shot™ Joystick Controller, you can do it all single-handed; control and fire at the same time.

One look at the handle and you know you'll have a better grip on your game. It's contour design fits comfortably around your palm. You can play for hours without developing a case of sore thumb. The firepower button on top of the handle gives you that extra margin of speed. (We didn't call it Quick-Shot for nothing.) You also have the option to use the left hand fire button simultaneously. The four removable suction cups hold the entire joystick firmly on any surface. It also comes with a long cord.

With all those superior features in one joystick, you know you got yourself a winning combination. And when it comes to beating video games, one hand is all you need!

Get the Quick-Shot™ now, you'll be that much ahead. After all, winning is what every game is all about.

THE WINNING EDGE.

CONTOUR HANDLE AND RAPID FIRE BUTTON

OPTIONAL LEFT HAND FIRE BUTTON

UNIVERSAL JACK & LONG CORD

REMOVABLE SURE FOOT SUCTION CUPS

Quick Shot™

BY SPECTRAVISION™

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Look what for your VIC 20.

Fast action. Complex strategies. Interesting characters. Superior sound effects. Multiple levels of play.

These are the things you want from your VIC 20™

They're also the things you get from Tronix. From the people who brought you *Swarm!*, *Sidewinder* and *Galactic Blitz*.

And now, there's more.

Now Tronix brings you the same rewarding rapid-fire excitement in three brand-new game cartridges.

Each one is something different. Something new. But they all have one thing in common.

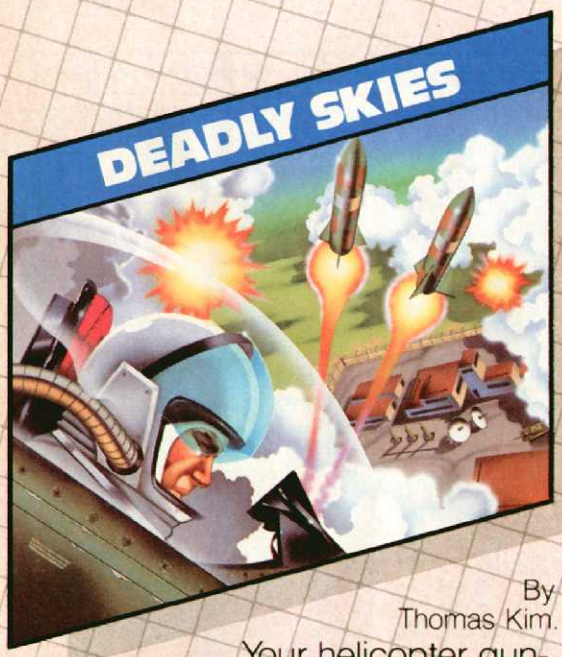
They're all designed to bring out the best in your VIC 20.

You shouldn't settle for anything less.

By Jimmy Huey.

In a predatory world of killer worms, dragons, stalkers, pods and fly traps, the scorpion prowls the maze in search of sustenance. Frogs and their eggs mean survival to the scorpion. But they can also mean instant death! (Suggested retail $39.95)

we have in store



By
Thomas Kim.

Your helicopter gunship hovers over the enemy's military bases and missile emplacements. Your mission is to destroy them. But as the sky fills with smart bombs and anti-aircraft fire, there's less and less room for a wrong move! (Suggested retail $39.95)

By
Corey Ostman.

Deep in the earth, a fortune awaits. But the dark passageways are filled with peril as well as profit. Runaway boxcars. Crashing boulders. A claim jumper with murder in his eyes. Be careful. But be quick—oxygen is in short supply! (Suggested retail $39.95)

TRONIX™

8295 South La Cienega Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90301

Look for Tronix games in your nearest store. If you can't find them there, write to us.

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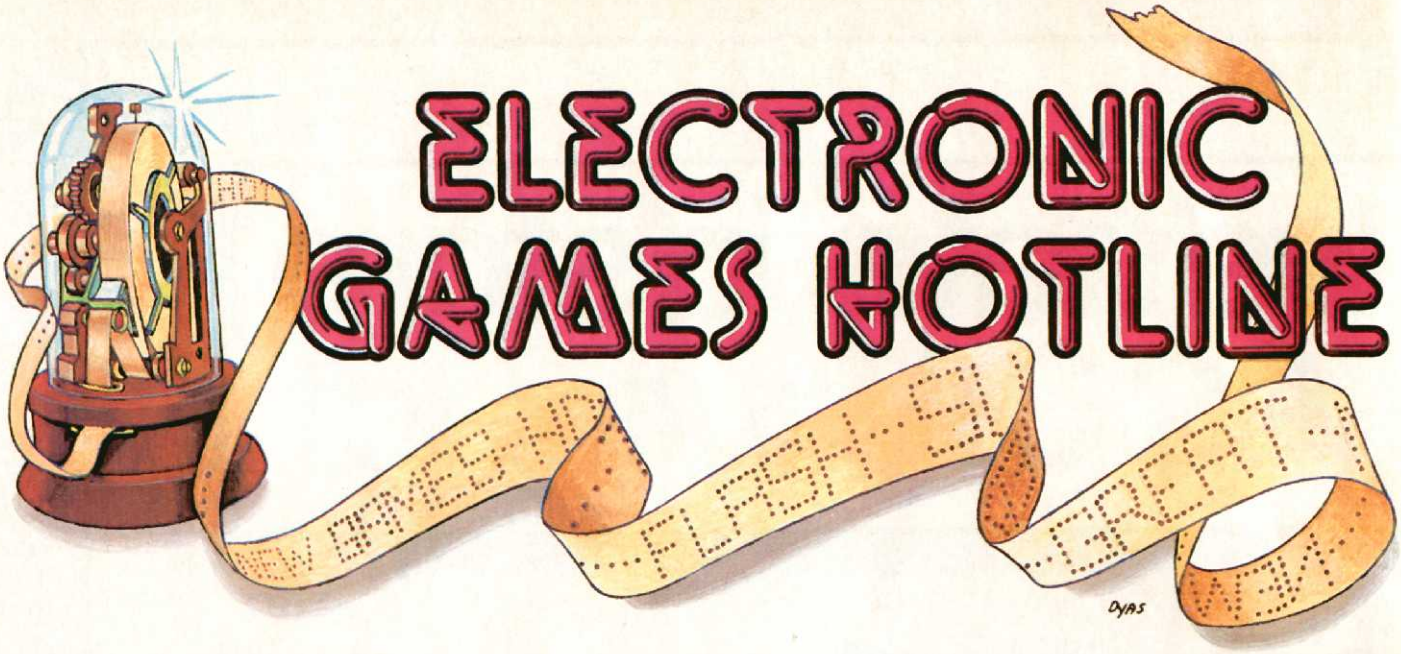
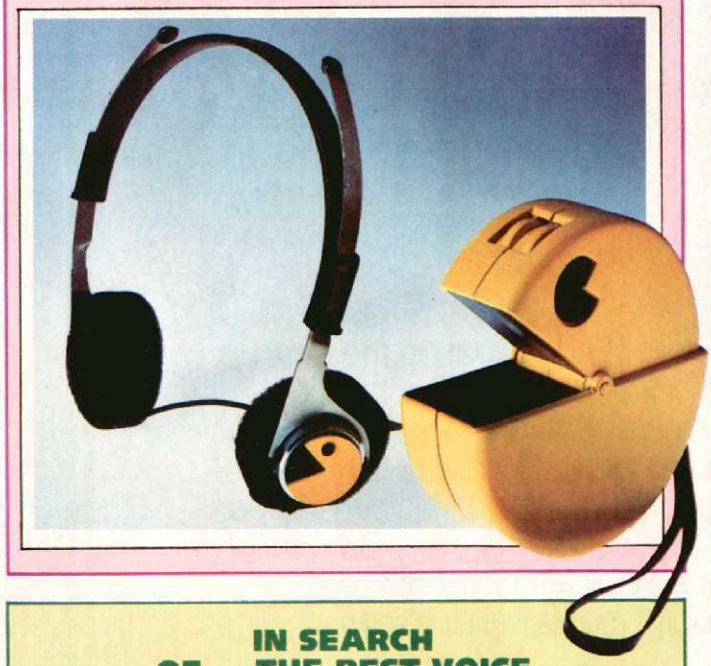


PAC-MAN GOES WALK-MAN

A new portable radio and headset combination, patterned after America's most lovable gobbler, will be available soon from Tiger Electronics.

Operable with or without the accompanying headset, the AM radio runs on a single 9-volt battery and comes with a convenient hand or belt strap.

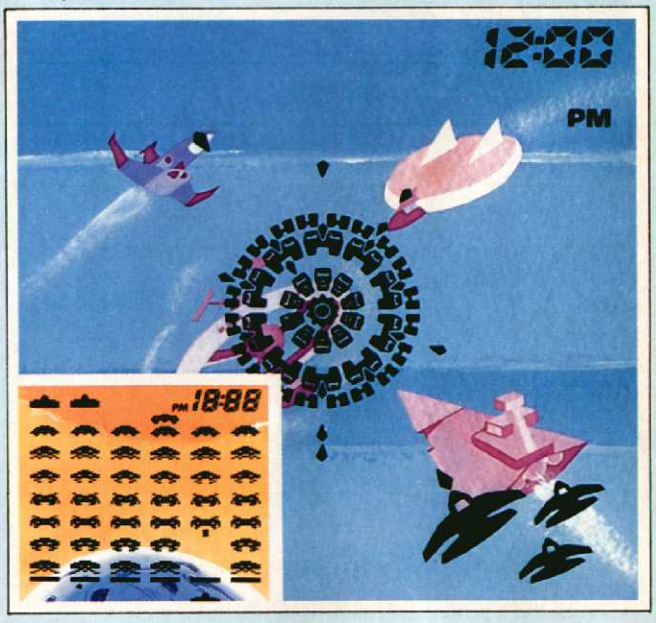


IN SEARCH OF. . .THE BEST VOICE

Be alerted all crooners. . . The Alien Group, manufacturer of the Voice Box for the Apple II and Atari computers, is sponsoring a contest to find the best talking or singing game program. The very best educational, adventure or arcade style game, as judged by a panel of 13-18 year old gamers, will earn its winning inventor a $5,000 prize in addition to any royalties the game generates.

Prospective entrants can get additional info and a copy of the contest's requirements by simply writing to: The Alien Group, 27 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010.

Playfields from Tiger's Space Castle and (inset) Invaders game



TIGER CHARTS STAND-ALONE GAME EXPLOSION

More, more, more. . .is what fans of stand-alone electronic games will be getting from Tiger Electronic Toys in 1983. Company spokesman, Bill Pasko, reports that Tiger, encouraged by the sales of its already-existent products on the market, will be pulling out all stops when it comes to releasing new titles.

The number of titles in the manufacturer's LCD Clock Games line will increase from four to seven, and will include **Caveman**, **King Kong**, **Space Fight**, **Dragon**, **Ghost House**, **Paratrooper** and **Pyramid**. Each unit offers two levels of difficulty, color graphics and retention of high-winning scores.

Tiger will also debut an edition of **Space Invaders**, licensed from Taito, which utilizes a liquid crystal display (LCD) that boasts colorful background graphics. Other releases are: **Star Castle**, **King Kong**, **Jawbreaker** and **Monster Maze**. *Space Invaders* will also be the title Tiger uses to inaugurate a series of 7½-in by 2½-in. hand-held arcade games that incorporate the use of calculators.

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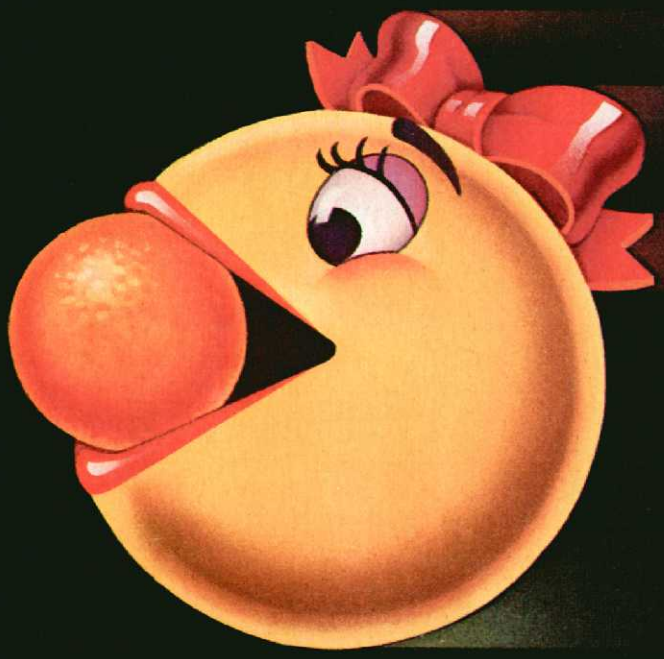


Which player is eating twice as much?

Think fast. Here comes MS. PAC-MAN* from Atari®.

Meet the new home version of MS. PAC-MAN. She looks and plays so much like the arcade, she's unlike any home video game you've ever played before. And she's only from Atari for use with the ATARI® 2600,™ and the Sears Video Arcade† systems.

You get four ghosts. Four mazes. Escape tunnels. And lots of floating munchies. Pears to pretzels, apples to oranges. To get the top banana, worth 5000 points, you have to know your little lady backward and forward.

The way the player on the left does. He gets 1000 points for the apple. While the player on the right gets only half as much for the orange. But plenty of indigestion.

So escort MS. PAC-MAN out of the arcade.

Because this woman's place is in the home.

ATARI

A Warner Communications Company.

ACTV STAGES PITFALL- TREASURE HUNT

ACTV staged a special contest, involving arcade aces in eight major US cities, to help promote its Arcade Award-winning videogame cartridge, **Pitfall**.

The company held a separate *Pitfall* play-off in each of the competitor's eight winning cities, generally in conjunction with an appearance by the Pitfall Harry Adventure Team, a group of real-life adventurers, led by Mark Hopey.

Maps outlining the mythical kingdom of Enarc, along with the dangerous route to $5000 in gold, were distributed to participants by ACTV. All of the dangerous perils found in *Pitfall's* game version were also incorporated into the competition. Luckily, gamers *did* receive a bit of help each week from local radio stations in each competitor's city, which ultimately led competitors to a grand total of $40,000 in cash prizes.

1200XL PACKS 64K—FOR UNDER $1000!

Atari's latest release, the under-$1000 model 1200XL computer is squarely aimed at the family market. This beautifully-styled machine packs 64K of memory, is compatible with existing 400 and 800 Atari units, and offers a high degree of user friendliness. For example, if something goes wrong, there's a diagnostic key that'll automatically reveal the trouble.

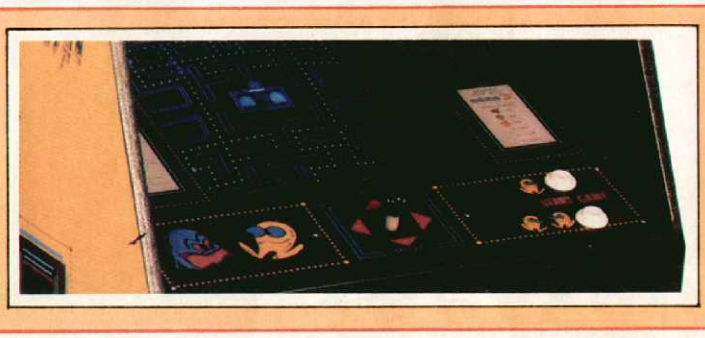
The 1200XL should reach retail outlets by mid-'83, and a line of "high-style" peripherals designed to visually match the system's casing is also planned.

Hurray for computers!

COLECO ADDS MEMORY

Super Game Module #3 for ColecoVision boosts its memory by one million bits. This plug-in device, slated to sell for less than $125, will permit the company to produce a line of ultra-enhanced games.

Titles will include **Super-Zaxxon, Super-Turbo** and **Super-Buck Rogers.**



MIDWAY ZAPS PAC-CRIME

A United States District Court in Orlando, FL, has convicted Larry Kruckenberg, a principal owner of International Vending Company and International Video Games Inc., of criminal contempt as a result of his violation of a court order.

The February 1982 order prohibits Kruckenberg from infringing copyrights of the Bally/Midway Mfg. Company, as it relates to the **Pac-Man** coin-op version of the videogame.

PITTSBURGH PAIR WIN INTELLIVISION FINALS

Ed Mandziuk and his son, Ed Jr., have laid claim to the unofficial title of America's most proficient parent/child videogaming team, by defeating 17 other such pairings in Mattel's Intellivision Video Challenge National Finals. The champions survived four hours of rigorous play in a Los Angeles showdown that included winners of all regional tournies taking home nearly $5000 in prizes.

The win concluded the first-ever parent/child electronic gaming event, in which family twosomes were required to prove their gaming ability by blasting up incoming UFOs, skiing down treacherous slopes, and knocking down pins for strikes and spares. In the finals, the two-player teams had to show their skills at six different Intellivision cartridges. In the ultimate round, the Mandziuks earned their title by whipping Baltimore's Charles and Don Mason by 45,000 points in Mattel's **Lock 'n Chase**.

The tournament helped out Variety Clubs International, a group which supports hospitals and institutions that aid ill and handicapped children.

Way to go, folks!

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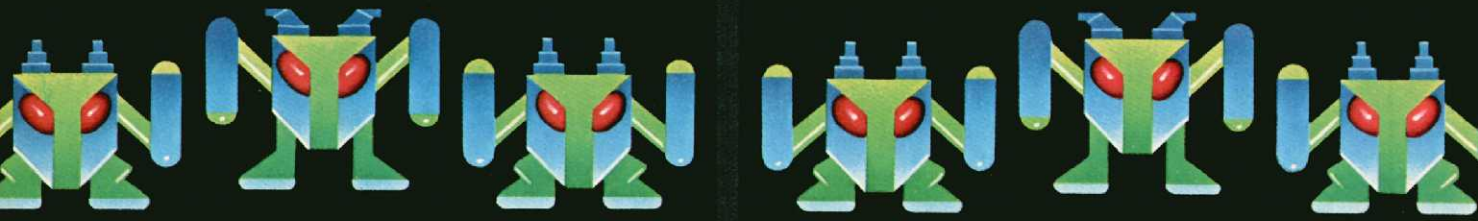


Which player is about to score with flying colors?

Better learn fast. Here comes Galaxian* from Atari®.

Pilot to co-pilot. Galaxian invaders are approaching your home. And they're only from Atari for use with the ATARI® 2600™, Sears Video Arcade† systems, and the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

These Galaxians look, sound, and act no different than the Galaxians you've battled in the arcade. They swoop, dodge, and fire with equal cunning. So you have to know your stuff.

Like the player on the left. He's about to hit a flying yellow Flagship for 150 points. But his opponent, on the right, will score only 30 points for hitting the stationary blue Drone. Tough luck, rookie.

If you want to know even more about which Galaxians to hit, hit the stores for Galaxian.

ATARI

A Warner Communications Company.

THE NATIONAL VANITY BOARD

Today's Top Coin-op Scores

Electronic Games is proud to announce the creation of the National Vanity Board to identify and honor the nation's arcade aces. Just as the **Electronic Games'** National Home Arcade salutes the achievements of the lords and ladies of livingroom gaming, the National Vanity Board will monitor the triumphs of the kings and queens of the coin-op videogaming world.

EG will update the listings each month based on information provided by game manufacturers, arcade operators and, most importantly, our hundreds of thousands of readers. If you or one of your buddies rewrites the record book for the most popular commercial arcade machines, getting the proper recognition for the new champ is as easy as following these three steps:

1. Set the record.
2. Show the arcade manager on duty your record score and have him (or her) sign the proper portion of the report form—copies or facsimiles are fine.
3. Mail your score report to: Electronic Games, 235 Park Avenue South, Sixth Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Score Report Form

Name of Player (Please Print)

_____

Player's Address _____

_____

Name of Game _____

Score _____

Name of Arcade _____

Arcade Address _____

_____

Arcade Operator's Signature _____

Here Are the Arcaders to Beat!

Missile Command (Atari)
Joe Fernandes
Artesia, CA
Record: 52,246,260

Centipede (Atari)
Darren Olson
Calgary, Canada
Record: 15,207,353

Donkey Kong Jr. (Nintendo)
Tim Hold
Milwaukee, WI
Record: 430,600

Crazy Climber (Nichibutsu)
Mark Benzie
Fort Royal, VA
Record: 856,250

Defender (Williams)
Marvin Norton
Safford, AZ
Record: 49,367,750

Pac-Man (Midway)
Jeff Reinis
Garland, TX
Record: 15,676,420

Scramble (Stern)
Bob Radchenka
Manitoba, Canada
Record: 12,463,240

Phoenix (Centuri)
Jim Barnett
Philadelphia, PA
Record: 786,904

Frogger (Sega/Gremlin)
Dave Marsden
Santo, TX
Record: 2,400,050

Galaga (Midway)
Jack Pardo
Lansing, MI
Record: 9,635,070

Omega Race (Midway)
Gary Buchanan
Brentwood, TN
Record: 1,960,400

Stargate (Williams)
Mike McCrary
Albuquerque, NM
Record: 64,830,268

Robotron (Williams)
Ken Vance
Las Vegas, NV
Record: 200,257,350

Tempest (Atari)
Ken Vance
Las Vegas, NV
Record: 4,999,993

Vanguard (Centuri)
Guillermo Toro
Caba Rojo, PR
Record: 2,238,220

Wizard of Wor (Midway)
Johnny Thatch
Marietta, GA
Record: 398,000

Astro Blaster (Sega/Gremlin)
Mike Hudson
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Record: 247,570

Gorf (Midway)
Jim Hart
Jacksonville, NC
Record: 1,237,500

Dig-Dug (Atari)
Chris Morelli
Pittsburgh, PA
Record: 3,760,000

Donkey Kong (Nintendo)
Bill Schenley
Ocean Grove, NJ
Record: 11,800,300

Frenzy (Stern)
Randy Gordon
Everett, WA
Record: 1,143,743

FROGGER

Zaxxon (Sega/Gremlin)
Tim Williams
Climax, NC
Record: 2,136,200

Tron (Midway)
Dave Libby
Hampton, VA
Record: 5,999,522

Solar Fox (Midway)
Ed Zywusko
Beverly, MA
Record: 588,570

Thief (Pacific Novelty)
John Carver
Holly Hill, FL
Record: 389,890

Kick-Man (Midway)
Rich Turkishev
Manitov Springs, CO
Record: 4,579,520

Kangaroo (Atari)
Ryan Steffes
Haven, WI
Record: 397,600

Looping (Venture Line)
Ed Leech
Frankfort, IL
Record: 1,256,810

Joust (Williams)
Richard Jones
Lisburn, PA
Record: 3,110,230

Kids Protest Maze Games

COARSEGOLD, Calif.- Carrying placards and shouting slogans, kids across the United States took to the streets today to protest tedious and outdated computer maze games.

No injuries were reported, and damage was limited to games based on stale mazes.

"The turn-out doesn't amaze me," said R. Kaid, chairman of "M.A.D. - Mazes Are Dumb."

"Kids are tired of moving in and around walls," he said.

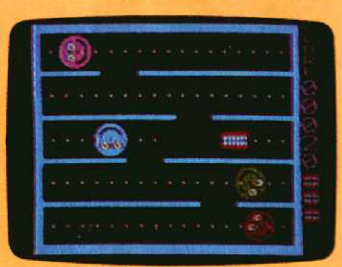
News of the demands struck to the heart of the arcade game industry. The most innovative of companies - Sierra On-Line, Inc. and Tigervision - responded with the new Jawbreaker.

"The entire screen moves - the happy faces, the set of chompers, even the walls," said Kaid.

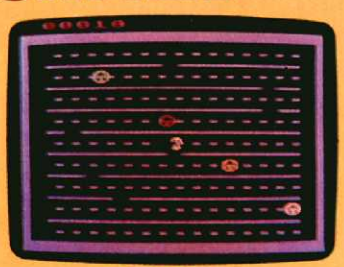
"No maze creates as much excitement as our Jawbreaker," he said, and added, "The colors are brighter, the figures bigger, the action faster."

While maze makers waited for someone to buy their games, kids and other M.A.D. members gobbled up the NEW versions of Jawbreaker.

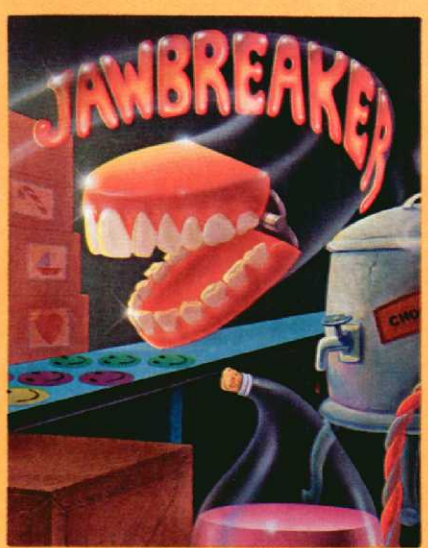
THE END OF THE MAZE CRAZE



APPLE, ATARI, COM 64 AND IBM VERSIONS BY
SIERRAVISION
Sierra On-Line, Inc.
Sierra On-Line Building
Coarsegold, CA 93614
(209) 683-6858



VCS VERSION BY
TIGERVISION
Tiger Electronic Toys
909 Orchard
Mundelein, IL 60060
(312) 949-8100



APPLE ATARI COM 64 VCS IBM

★ THE NATIONAL ★ ARCADE SCOREBOARD

THE BEST SCORES FOR POPULAR VIDEOGAMES

Photos of readers' best scores are really pouring into the offices of **Electronic Games**, and the competition among the land's arcade aces is even keener than expected. There are plenty of top players out there, and the rankings listed here show that they're hitting the joystick hot and heavy in a bid for national recognition.

The scores tabulated here reflect the first group of games which the editors of **EG** selected to kick off this continuing compilation of home videogaming records. We'll be adding more games and updating their scores each month, a few at a time, until we're covering most of what's hot.

To have your gaming achievements recognized in the National Arcade Scoreboard, all you've got to do is follow a few simple rules:

1. Every score must be accompanied by a photograph of the TV screen showing the score. These photos do not have to be of publishable quality, just readable by our judges.
2. All photographs received become the property of **Electronic Games** and none can be returned.
3. Be sure to include your complete name and address. (We will print only the name and city in the magazine, but we may want to contact high scorers for helpful gaming hints.)

Games currently eligible for the National Arcade Scoreboard are:

★ **Asteroids** (Atari VCS) — Game #6
★ **Defender** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
★ **Grand Prix** (Activision) — Course #4
★ **Space Hawk** (Mattel) — Game #1 (auto-fire, if desired)
★ **Spacechase** (Apollo) — Game #1
★ **The Incredible Wizard** (Astrocade) (one player, easy difficulty)
★ **UFO** (Odyssey) — Game #1
★ **USAC Auto Racing** (Mattel) — Course #1

THE HONOR ROLL

Asteroids/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #6
1. **579,660** — Lance Simon, Carmichael, CA
2. **199,990** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI
3. **195,310** — Bob Clarke, Racine, WI

Defender/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #1
1. **4,717,850** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI
2. **4,183,500** — Charles Own Jr., Little Rock, AR
3. **2,004,200** — Alan Hewston, Greensburg, PA

Grand Prix/Activision/Atari VCS/Course #4
1. **1:34:93** — Perry Brenkman, Florence, AZ
2. **1:35:41** — Mike Ratledge, Charleston, SC
3. **1:36:69** — John Larem, Palos Heights, IL

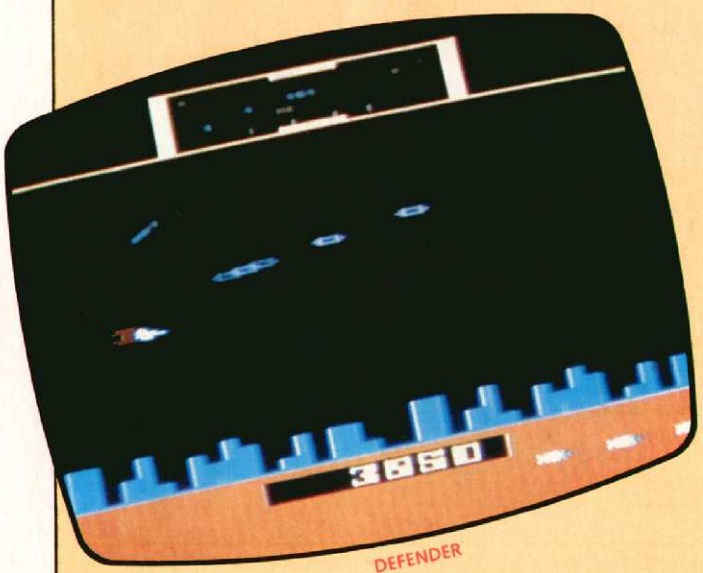
Space Hawk/Mattel/Intellivision/ Game #1
1. **10,305,220** — John Malley, Aurora, IL
2. **10,142,040** — Luc LaBelle, Manitoba, Canada
3. **7,152,960** — Duke Fuller, Garden Grove, CA

Spacechase/Apollo/Atari VCS/Game #1
1. **185,075** — Tom Garcia, Whittier, CA
2. **175,400** — Rich Bryan, Taylorville, IL
3. **93,300** — Ed Semrad, Waukesha, WI

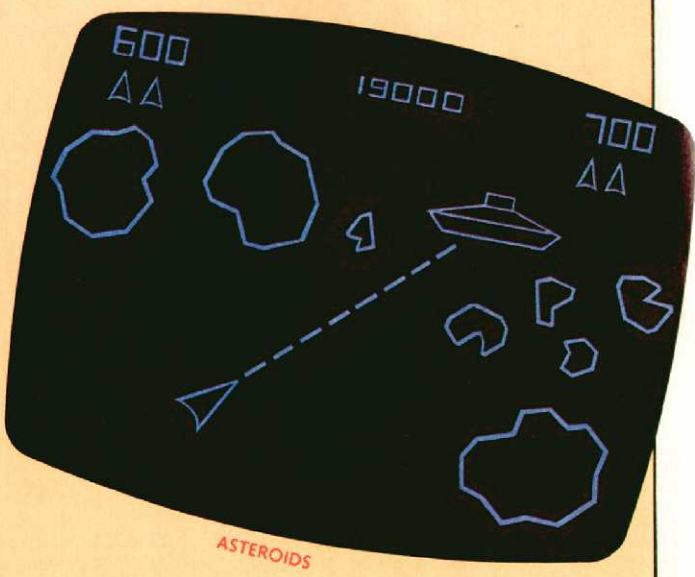
The Incredible Wizard/Astrocade/Astrocade
1. **130,510** — Bob Mirsch, Warren, MI
2. **115,050** — Kark Wolski, Glen Ellyn, IL
3. **99,990** — Swain Valasek, Tampa, FL

UFO/Odyssey/Odyssey ²/Game #1
1. **1,872** — Bill Simsalek, Cleveland, OH
2. **1,674** — Mark Hansen, Ontario, Canada
3. **1,636** — Lee Raymond, no address given

USAC Auto Racing/Mattel/Intellivision Course #1
1. **2:49** — John Malley, Aurora, IL
2. **2:52** — Ken Barley, Canby, OR



DEFENDER



ASTEROIDS

WICO

COMMAND CONTROL™

The Authentic Arcade Trackball:

every little movement has a meaning all its own.

Spin our phenolic ball 3 degrees to the right — and you'll instantly see a proportional movement on the screen. Spin our phenolic ball 2 revolutions per second — and you'll get that exact same speed on the screen. Only WICO gives you high resolution positioning with the ultimate in speed control. That's why only WICO trackballs can give you higher scores on games like Demon Attack,™ Missile Command,™ Centipede,™ Space Invaders™ and many more.

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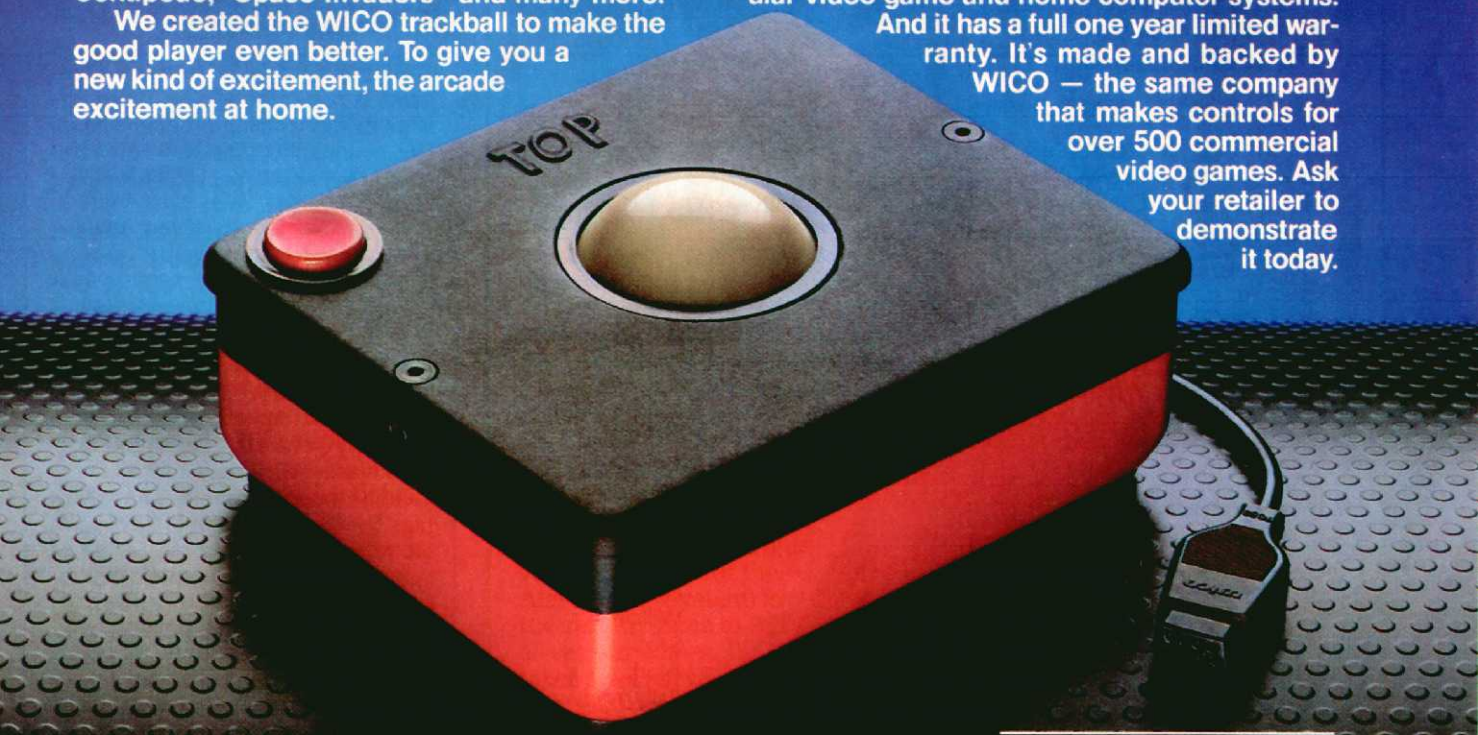
Only WICO's special computer technology gives the home player the arcade feel. It has its own custom microprocessor built in. So it can talk to your system in a language all its own. It responds as fast as your hand reacts — and as accurately. You'll notice a difference the first time you play.

The WICO Command Control Trackball works with Atari,® Commodore VIC-20® and 8 other popular video game and home computer systems. And it has a full one year limited warranty. It's made and backed by WICO — the same company that makes controls for over 500 commercial video games. Ask your retailer to demonstrate it today.



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THE SOURCE

FOR THE ARCADE —
AND NOW FOR THE HOME.

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E.G. READERS PICK THEIR FAVORITE GAMES

☆Most Popular Videogame Cartridges☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	System	Manufacturer
1	1	Pitfall	Atari 2600	Activision
2	2	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
3	3	Ladybug	ColecoVision	Coleco
4	7	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
5	—	River Raid	Atari 2600	Activision
6	4	Venture	ColecoVision	Coleco
7	—	Pac-Man	Atari 5200	Atari
8	—	Star Raiders	Atari 2600	Atari
9	14	Turbo	ColecoVision	Coleco
10	—	Wizard of Wor	Atari 2600	CBS Videogames
11	6	Donkey Kong	Atari 2600	Coleco
12	—	Galaxian	Atari 5200	Atari
13	—	Vanguard	Atari 2600	Atari
14	—	Star Raiders	Atari 5200	Atari
15	9	Megamania	Atari 2600	Activision

☆Most Popular Computer Programs☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	System	Manufacturer
1	2	Star Raiders	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
2	1	Pac-Man	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
3	3	Centipede	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
4	4	Castle Wolfenstein	Apple II	Muse
5	—	Preppie	Atari 400-800-1200	Scott Adams
6	—	Omega Race	All systems	Commodore
7	—	Defender	VIC-20	Atari
8	9	Jawbreaker	Atari 400-800-1200	Sierra On-Line
9	8	Missile Command	Atari 400-800-1200	Atari
10	—	Wizardry	Atari 400-800-1200	Sir-Tech

☆Most Popular Coin-Op Videogames☆

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Game	Manufacturer
1	1	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
2	9	Joust	Williams
3	3	Zaxxon	Sega
4	4	Dig-Dug	Atari
5	6	Ms. Pac-Man	Bally/Midway
6	2	Tron	Bally/Midway
7	5	Donkey Kong, Junior	Nintendo
8	—	Galaga	Bally/Midway
9	8	Tempest	Atari
10	7	Robotron	Williams

Readers Choose Top Games

Since mere *quantity* of play doesn't necessarily equal actual popularity, **Electronic Games** bases its standings on the votes of its readers. These lists of most popular games are based on the more than 1000 Reader Polls. We update the "picked hits" lists in every issue of **Electronic Games.** So send in your votes!

SEGA SHOWCASES LASER GAME

Sega Enterprises gave visitors a glimpse of the future at a recent coin-op industry show by displaying **Astron Belt**. Billed as a "laser disc videogame of the future", its laser disc images interact with computer-generated graphics to produce a powerful gaming experience which is further amplified by a stereo sound system that makes use of "body-sonics" technology.

Another big plus for *Astron Belt* is that its visuals are composed of 320,000 picture elements, instead of the approximately 60,000 elements which Sega reports as being typical of present-day videogames.

Of course, *Astron Belt* won't be winging its way into arcaders' favorite hang-outs this year, or probably even next, but it does open up lots of exciting possibilities as far as electronic gaming in a new dimension is concerned.

EARLY RELEASES FOR TIMEX

HES, a third-party software company, is presently helping Timex enlarge its forthcoming program lineup. HES (Human Engineered Software) currently has 10 packages retailing from $13 to $16 each.

Among the latest releases, **Reversi 1000** offers videogamers a strategy boardgame playable by one or two competitors and **2K Trek** pits the gamer's starship against aliens in a battle to save the star system. Other releases include **3D Maze**, which features a treasure-seeking extravaganza in a randomly-generated labyrinth. **Cosmic Invaders** was created for all of the invasion-happy gamers, and **Sabotage** for the maze-happy. **ZX Scramble** requires gamers to master thrust and altitude controls on their bombers, and **2K Fun Pack's** a real bargain to behold, containing three arcade-style games for the price of one — **Music Maker, Breakout,** and **Invaders.**

SV-318 TO PLAY COLECOVISION

Spectravision's new personal computer, the SV-318 will offer a special emulator for ColecoVision programs. Dubbed the SV-603, it's tagged for retail markets by early this year and is slated to sell for under $70.

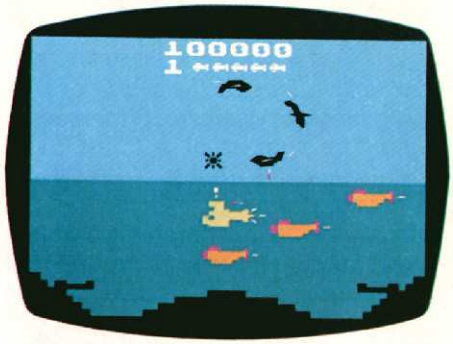
The unit is connected directly to the rear of the computer.

Polaris.™

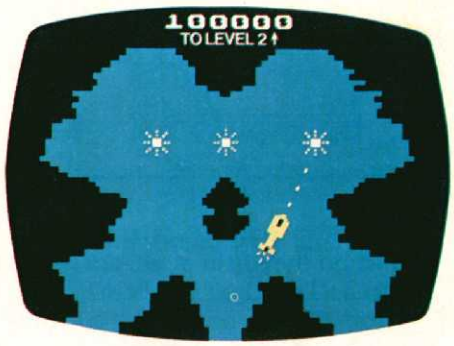
Play one game and you've been through a war.

Taito's Polaris from Tigervision. With three screens.

High Altitude Bombers



Dive Bombers



Underwater Mine Field

Polaris™

Just as in the popular arcade game, you captain a submarine that's on patrol deep inside enemy waters. Your orders call it a seek and destroy mission. It won't be long, though, before you call it a suicide mission.

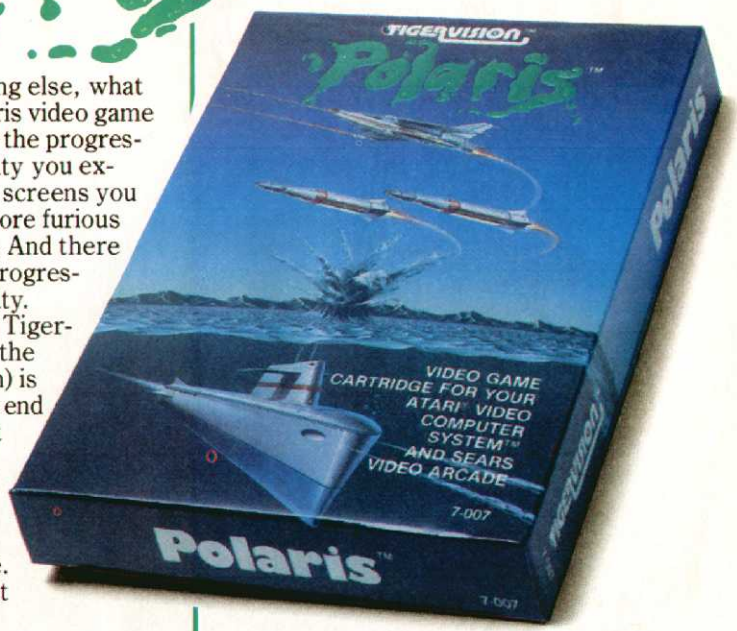
The action starts in screen one when you're jumped by wave after wave of high altitude bombers. You'll also spot enemy subs stalking you. But you've got missiles. Use them.

During the second screen, a lone dive bomber swoops down, unleashing death dealing, heat seeking missiles against you. Do you dive deep? Hide under an enemy sub? Or stay near the surface, waiting for a good shot. Well, you're the captain, so it's up to you. But one false move could be your last.

The third screen presents you with the almost impossible job of maneuvering your sub through a narrow strait, past swinging mines and into even more danger.

More than anything else, what makes the new Polaris video game such a challenge are the progressive levels of difficulty you experience. The more screens you pass through, the more furious the attacks become. And there are no less than 16 progressive levels of difficulty.

New Polaris from Tigervision (designed for the Atari® VCS™ System) is the sea war game to end all sea war games. It takes steel nerves, faultless strategies and precise battle plans to get through in one piece. And the odds against you are enormous. But, as they say, somebody's got to do it.



For use with the Atari Video Computer System™.

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TIGERVISION™

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909 Orchard, Mundelein, Illinois 60060 (312) 949-8100

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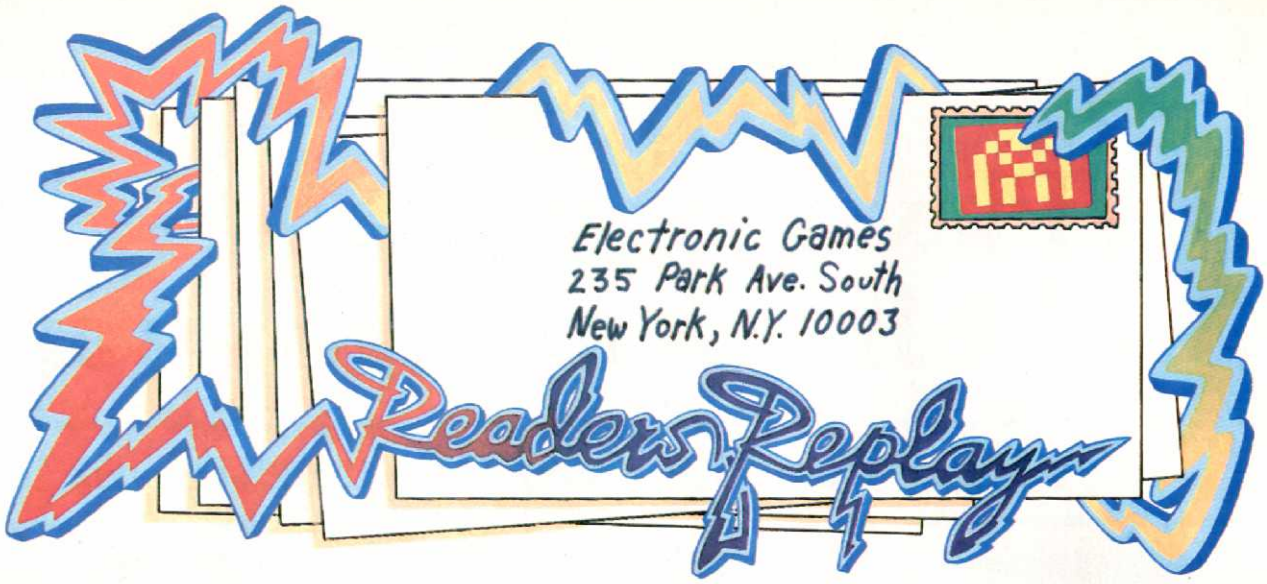


A DISGRUNTLED GAMER SPEAKS

I own the Intellivision game unit and am dissatisfied with the disc controllers. I have seen joystick attachments advertised in this magazine. My question is: do they help at all, and could **EG** do a "Test Lab" on them?

Also, there's a coin-op called **Tazzmania** which is in my college arcade. This is a really good game and I was wondering why my school is the only place I can find one?

Michael Corkery
Address unknown

Ed: For a special piece on the add-on joysticks for Intellivision controllers, check out the series running in **EG**. *Also, look for the May issue of our sister publication, Video, for a comprehensive look at the world of joysticks by Marc Wielage. As for making them the subject of a "Test Lab" installment, it's doubtful. We like to save that column for in-depth looks at complicated hardware items that just might otherwise baffle game-oriented hobbyists.*

As for Stern's Tazzmania, you can occasionally find one around, but this is just one of the scores of titles, many of which are fine, fine games. Some titles just get relegated to the arcade dust bin. We'll be sweeping some of that accumulated dust off a few of the best "Closet Classics" in an upcoming **EG** *article. Watch for it!*

VALLEY GAMER SPEAKS!

Like, do you know how many like "k's" the VCS has? Like, why didn't the meatballs over at Sunnyvale, CA program more "k's" into the thing? Like, we're talking pathetic city. Like,

ASTEROIDS

you know, **Asteroids** is heavy into flickering.

Like, when was this crude element released to the like, poor unsuspecting public? P.S. Like, I wear a like-size medium T-shirt, no french cut style — like, could you see me in a french cut style? Hurt me, hurt me, I'm sure. Totally.

Sandra Blonde
Orion, IL

Ed: Like, it's totally awesome to hear from a gamer who hails from, like, the home of the like, valley girls of Orion, Illinois.

Anyway, to, like, answer your questions totally, it goes like so: When the VCS was first designed, it was intended to play two games: **Pong** and **Combat**. *The designers realized they had the room to double the originally intended 2K capability, and did — little dreaming that anyone would ever take advantage of it. Since then, 4K VCS games have become the standard, with bank switching boosting its number up to 8K of*

Intellivision with joystick adapters on controllers

flip-flop program memory.

The VCS, however, is what designers like to call a "software-oriented" system. That is, you can put all the heavy stuff right in the cartridge itself. Several companies — Starpath with their RAM expanding Supercharger, a forthcoming line of games with added RAM and ROM from CBS Software and several others — are using that design convenience to do their magical thing inside those plastic casings. Within that cartridge sits a tiny chip, and the things that are being done with the chips will amaze you.

In the meantime, check out **Vanguard** *and* **Ms. Pac-Man** *from Atari,* **Robotank, Enduro,** *and* **Krazy Kapers**

DEMON ATTACK

from Activision, **Demon Attack** *and* **Atlantis** *and* **Jawbreaker** *from Tigervision, as just a smattering of the truly magnificent games either already available — or soon to be — for the VCS.*

And if you don't think these titles are, like, totally awesome, then gag me with a joystick. I mean really. Totally. Now get outta' here.

A WICO DISSIDENT

Just a word on the November recommendation for the Wico joystick.

First, the base malfunctioned and then upon an even exchange, the joystick fire button failed. Thanks, but no thanks.

Robert Sorokac
Edison, NJ

Ed: Obviously, Robert, no product is ever going to be totally perfect right down the line, and we've gotten plenty of letters by gamers who couldn't have been happier with their Wico sticks. However, you are not the only reader to complain of breakage. We'll be looking into this matter posthaste and will let you know exactly what the heck's going on!

A CHARGED QUERY

I've heard that a company called Arcadia (now "Starpath" ed.) is making a RAM booster dubbed the Supercharger. I have also heard that games made for this system will be stored on cassettes.

My first question is: are the cassettes the same kind used to play music? The second question is, is it possible to copy the games from one cassette onto another? My last question regards whether or not it's legal.

Anick Jesdanun
Edison, NJ

Ed: The answers to your questions, in order, are: yes, perhaps, and a long, loud, reverberating "NO". Virtually all computer systems use cassette tape as a storage vehicle for programming data — a new format that the Supercharger brings to the VCS.

With regard to copying tapes — it isn't all that easy to do. On a computer, a non-protected piece of cassette software can be programmed into the system and then spit back out onto a blank tape. In the case of the Supercharger games, tape-to-tape translations would be necessary. Unless done professionally, however, valuable lines and strings of data may get lost in the process. So without professional tape-duplication equipment, copying them is not too practical.

Finally, copying software under legal copyright protection is breaking the law — not to mention stealing from the game's creators and possibly being responsible even for a premature price increase.

So let's play by the rules, folks. Remember, a gamer is upstanding, honest and loyal, and a firm believer in fair play — unless the other guy gets too good, but then that's why they invented difficulty switches!

Starpath with recorder and Atari 2600

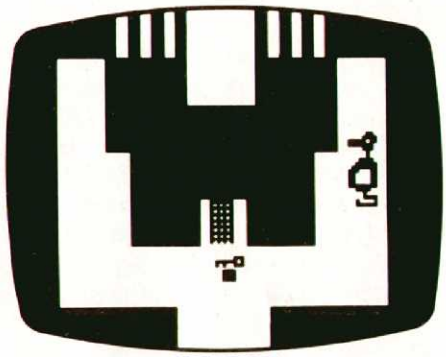
SUPER-DUPERCHARGER

Now that Starpath has produced the Supercharger, is it likely that somebody else could create a more powerful version? Also, enclosed is a late Christmas present for the Game Doctor, a token from a local arcade.

P.S. How do you find the secret message in **Adventure** — I have tried everything!

Jim Anderson
Sheldon, WI

Ed: At press time, there were no other versions of the Supercharger on the horizon, although several companies, including CBS Videogames, have RAM-ROM boosters installed in the cartridges themselves for an extra few bucks.


ADVENTURE

The Doc sends his solicitations, by the way, and wishes you a very happy new year. He'd also love to tell you how to find the secret message in Adventure, but is unable to, as it's against editorial policy. Nice try, though!

BYTING THE BULLET

As an avid videogamer and the owner of both an Atari 2600 and an Atari 800 computer, I'm quite interested in the amount of RAM and ROM found in the various available videogames.

In your December issue, you gave RAM accounts for the ColecoVision and Atari 5200. For those interested (me included), could you provide in the near future, a chart indicating all of the systems' RAM and ROM capabilities?

I was a bit shocked to read of the 5200's 64K potential, being the owner of an Atari 48K 800 with cassette and disc drives at considerably greater cost. Also, will the 5200 controllers

Continued on page 105

VIDEO-GAME

PREVIEW

Our Second Annual Unveiling of the

By THE EDITORS
OF ELECTRONIC GAMES

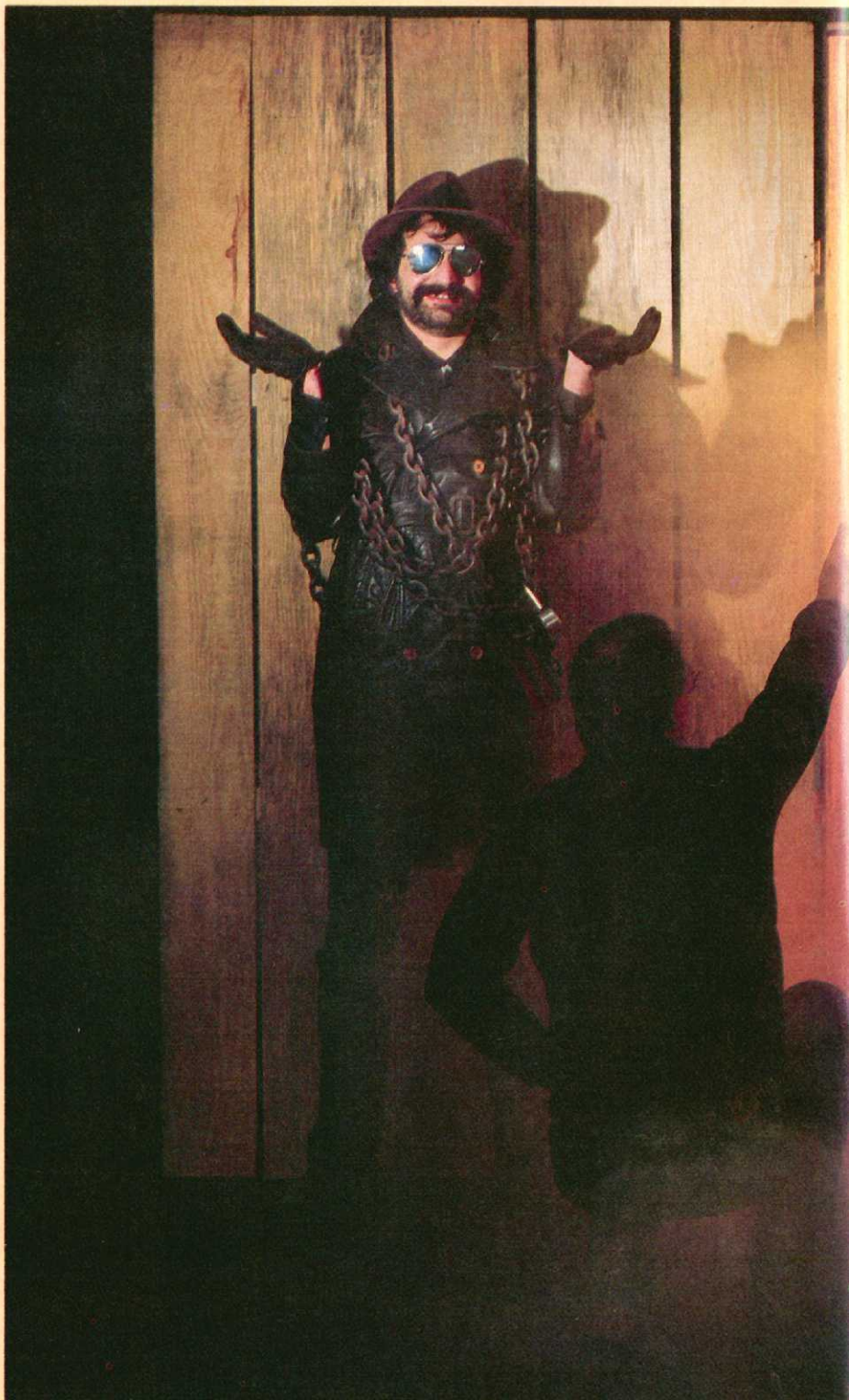
Double-locked doors decorated with impressive "Top Secret: Keep Out" signs are creaking open all across the country. Emerging from within are brisk technicians in slightly rumpled lab smocks and the more laid-back programmers wearing that tribe's semi-official "uniform" of faded work shirts and jeans.

After months of low-profile, but feverish activity, the prime creators within the electronic gaming industry are coming out of hiding. And in their hand, they're carrying — the *loot*. Right now, the techies and the programmers are turning over all-new hardware and software to the advertising and marketing boys. These are the items that the electronic gamelovers of America will be enjoying during the second half of the current year and the first few months of 1984.

Of course, the editors of this magazine have kept watch over these all-important doorways for some time now, so we were right on hand to get all the good news about what's in store for the world's fastest-growing hobby.

And you don't think we'd leave you readers out of all the excitement, do you? Of course not! So before everyone gets too impatient, let's start our guided tour through the land of gaming goodies to come.

If 1982 was "The Year of the Videogame Explosion," the one under way right now may well go down in the books as "The Year of the Affordable Home Gaming Computer". The biggest 1983 trend is very likely to be that the videogaming and computer gaming segments of the hobby will now become even more closely tied



NEW '83

Games We'll all be Playing Soon!

together than they are already. Companies that once did only videogame cartridges, like Activision, are heading toward the computer software field even as some traditional publishers of computer games, like Micro Lab, are dipping a toe into the videogame cartridge market.

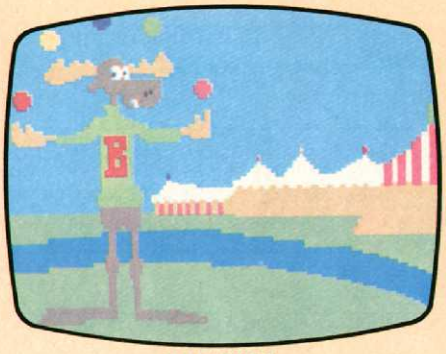
The same trend is observable on the hardware side, too. Mattel, Coleco and Atari are all producing both videogame and computer systems, Commodore is putting new emphasis on developing entertainment software for the VIC-20 and higher-powered Commodore 64, and several other companies are ready to hit the stores with small computers that will have full lines of games to attract the mass audience.

THE HOT NEW HARDWARE

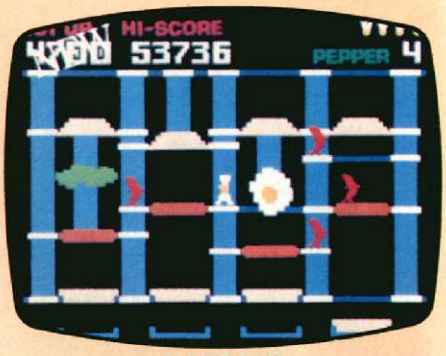
In a period marked by hardware innovation, Mattel nevertheless stands out as one of the most active companies in this area. Although some of Mattel's plans are probably tentative, meaning they're subject to change, the southern California manufacturer is hoping to make true believers out of the 80 million Americans who now play electronic games.

Already available by the time you read this is the freshly revamped Intel-

FLINTSTONES



BULLWINKLE



BURGER TIME

livision II. It is fully compatible with the original Intellivision, although its streamlined casing measures only 10-in. x 6&5/8-in.. It has some new features, including an on/off indicator light, detachable controllers and a much lower retail price. The exact cost is yet to be determined, but under $100 looks like a definite possibility.

A keyboard that fits either the original Intellivision or the Intellivision II is also heading to market. It will probably sell for roughly $140 (including the expectable discount). The device will be sold under the name, Entertainment Computer System.

Not to be confused with the foregoing is Mattel's Aquarius home computer. This entry into the mini computer sweepstakes will sell for less than $200 for the basic system, and there will be peripherals such as a thermal printer, a tape storage system and a mini-expander with hand controllers. The basic 13-in. x 6-in. console boasts a 49-key moveable-key keyboard, and can display 256 different graphic characters in 16 colors. The machine has a 4K byte memory in its unenhanced form, but expansion modules can build this up to 52K.

And speaking of expansion modules, Mattel has one which will allow the Intellivision or Intellivision II to play cartridges which are compatible with the Atari VCS and Sears Tele-Arcade.

Last, but a million light years from least, is the Intellivision III. Discussed only in terms of total awe by those fortunate enough to have seen the prototype, this unit is intended to be Mattel's bid to produce the ultimate videogame. Projected to sport a $300 suggested retail price, this loaded-with-features machine sports the best graphics resolution of any videogame, even more on-screen colors, a greater amount of screen-RAM so that 64

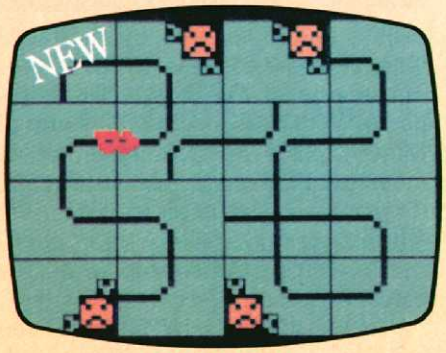
INTELLIVISION II

objects can move simultaneously, remote control joysticks, stereo port and much, much more. There's even a built-in voice synthesizer, which enables the Intellivision III to play all Intellivision-compatible cartridges, even the voice games, without additional apparatus.

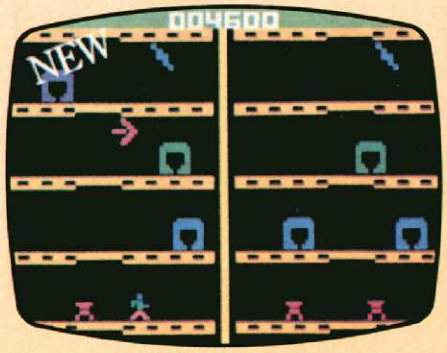
Although the games previewed were described by Mattel officials as "20% complete", they blew our socks off, anyway. Some of the multi-screen adventures, such as **Treasure of the Yucatan,** surpass anything yet seen on a home videogame screen.

Coleco is right on track with its previously announced plans to keep the ColecoVision state-of-the-art. The company plans a pair of new controllers — a roller controller which will be packed with a **Slither** cartridge, and a trigger-type command device that will be sold in conjunction with a new baseball game. The next 12 months will also see the introduction of an expansion module that will allow play of Intellivision-compatible games on the ColecoVision and a keyboard that can turn ColecoVision into a small computer.

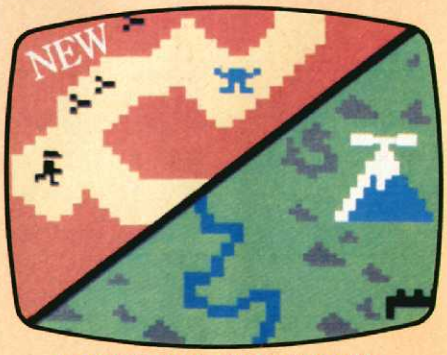
The biggest news, however, is the arrival in time for holiday gift-giving of the expansion module #3. All this little gizmo does is add approximately 128K bytes of memory to the existing system. It will come prepackaged with a **Super-Donkey Kong** cartridge. This game, said to be typical of what we can expect for the new line, will feature *four* screens of action, plus all the frills and flourishes found on the commercial arcade version. A special line of cartridges for use with the memory



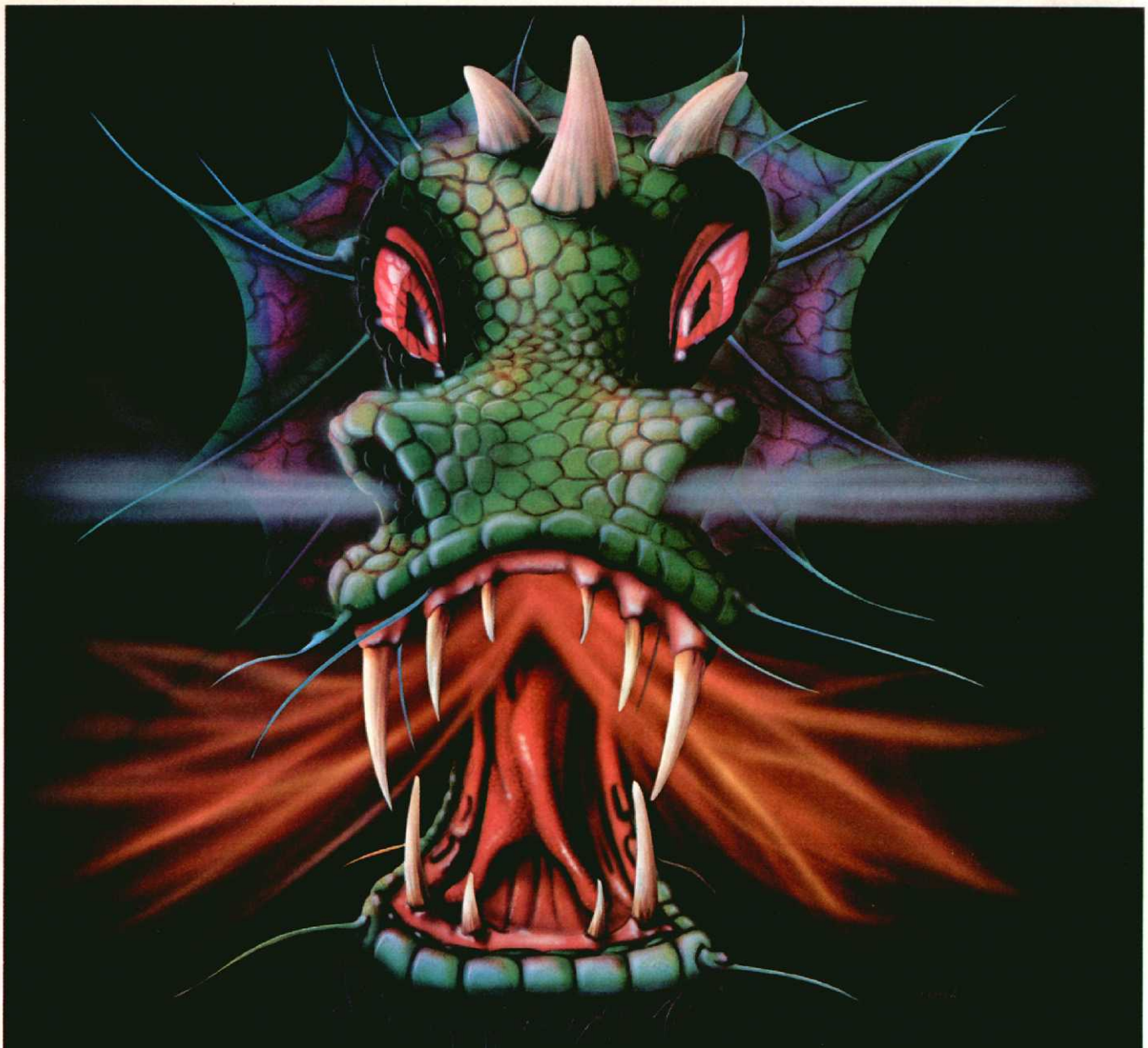
LOCO-MOTION



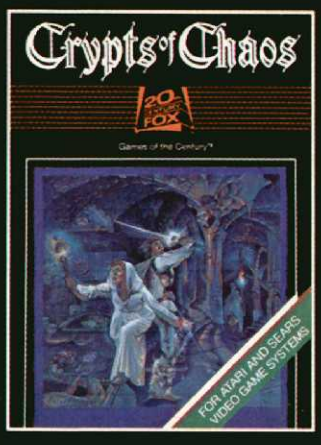
ADVENTURES OF TRON



ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



IF STRATEGY ISN'T YOUR GAME, CRYPTS OF CHAOS WILL EAT YOU ALIVE.



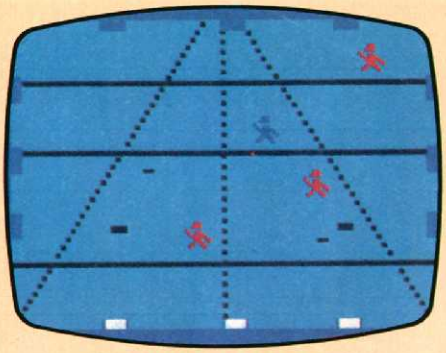
It took the master at Fox video games to create Crypts of Chaos—the new strategy game that would challenge the mind of a sorcerer. It's a dark fantasy world of wondrous wizards and terrible trolls. There is treasure there. But to win it you will have to be very very clever. For it's guarded by dragons. And they have had their fill of witless players.

FOR YOUR ATARI VCS.

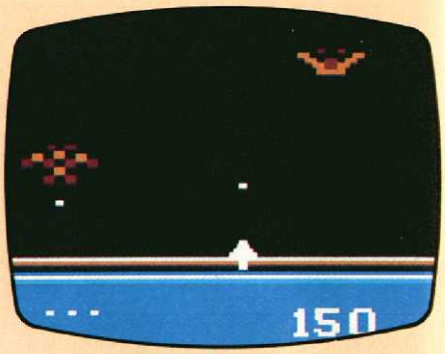
20th CENTURY FOX™

Games of the Century

NIGHT STALKER



TRON DEADLY DISCS



O² DEMON ATTACK

generated through the Intellivision booster include **Super-Zaxxon, Super-Turbo** and **Super-Buck Rogers.**

Coleco will shortly premiere the Gemini, an Atari 2600 work-alike. Also on tap is a voice synthesis module for the Gemini and, of course, a line of voice-enhanced cartridges to take advantage of its capabilities.

And speaking of taking advantage of capabilities, at least three companies are offering add-on devices that will help owners of the Atari 2600 (VCS) increase the power and flexibility of that system. The Entex 2000 Piggyback, suggested price $130, adds a fully tactile keyboard, BASIC resident and memory power (3K is standard, expandable to 19K) to accommodate a variety of educational and entertainment programs.

Unitronics is offering a 16K expander with keyboard for the Atari 2600. With its BASIC language and some of the peripherals scheduled for release later in '83 and in early '84, this $130 outfit can perform many of the operations of a personal computer.

Somewhat more specialized is the Personal Game Programming System from Answer Software. This piece of hardware will, says the company, enable you to alter game characters to the shape and color of your choice, add a personal logo or identification code to the cartridge, change the scoring, and generally customize existing games. No firm data for availability has been set.

The Odyssey Division of North American Philips plans to introduce a new videogame system this month or next under the Odyssey³ label. Completely compatible with the O², the new system has a better keyboard, more memory, modem capability and improved screen graphics. Cartridges that will display their full potential on the O³, yet are still playable on the older unit, are slated for publication soon.

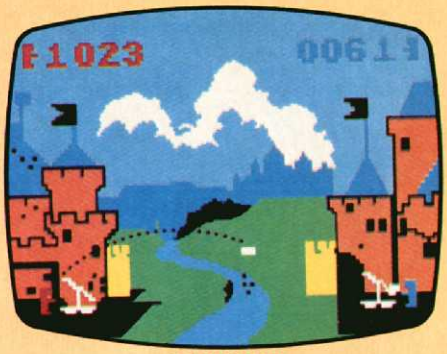
And if all these prime pieces of mechanical might don't fully satisfy you, then you ought to take a gander at the full-featured microcomputers on the way from SpectraVision, NEC and Panosonic. All have entertainment software, and the SpectraVision system even has a joystick built right into the console.

THE SUPER SOFTWARE

Parker Brothers, which scored very heavily with **Frogger** in 1982 has licensed several more former coin-op hits for translation in videogame cartridge form. Upcoming titles in this genre include **Super Cobra, Tutankham,** and this year's smash "cute" game, **Q*Bert.** Other announced car-

STRIP OF NEW ATARI MUPPET GAMES

COOKIE MONSTER MUNCH



SMITHEREENS

FREEDOM FIGHTER

BERMUDA TRIANGLE

tridges from Parker Brothers include **Strawberry Shortcake** (the first videogame aimed expressly at young girls, ages 4-8), **Popeye,** and **James Bond.**

Activision (ACTV), the first of the programmable software companies, seems to be leading the pack, in spite of individual smashes from competitors. Originally a cottage organization built around four ex-Atari game designers/programmers, today's ACTV team boasts 31 game creators and bi-coastal design facilities.

This army of talent is turning out games at a previously-unseen speed. Activision predicts almost two new titles per month, including Intellivision-compatible formats.

The first of the major spring titles for the 2600 are, from Matthew Hubbard, **Dolphin** — an undersea chase contest with a hungry octopus and plenty of kelp to get tangled in. **Oink!,** designed by Mike Lorenzen, is a clever combination of brick-breaking contests and the "Three Little Pigs". A wolf attempts to blow down the little pigs' sturdy brick house and the besieged hogs must fill in the walls or suffer the consequences!

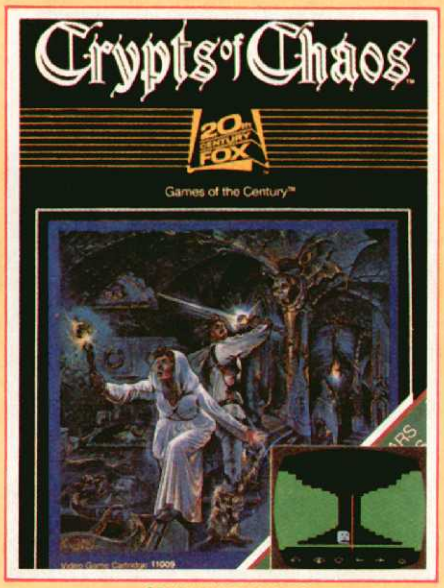
Keystone Kapers, by Garry Kitchen, is the cream of the new designer's crop. Utilizing a multi-level, multi-scenario play-mechanic, Garry created a game that's both fascinating to play and a delight to watch. Everything remains in period, from all the old-fashioned peace officers to the objects such as Philco radios which periodically turn up for cameo appearances.

In the somewhat more distant future, however, watch for the most incredible first-person racing game ever seen on the 2600 and an item for Al Milled called **Robotank** that will blast you out of your seat!

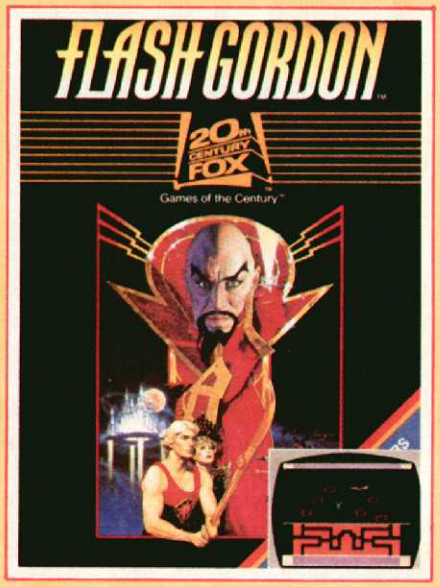
Intellivision fans can not only look forward to translations of the most popular existing ACTV titles, but to several original winners as well. Particularly intriguing was a video variant on those old "slide the pieces" puzzles from Carol (**River Raid**) Shaw.

Imagic was both the second major entrant into the 2600 sweepstakes and the first company to produce Intellivision-compatible cartridges. **Demon Attack,** their smash debut cartridge for the 2600, won "Videogame of the Year" honors in this year's Arkie balloting and has since been translated for the Atari computers, the VIC-20, the Odyssey², and the Intellivision. Seems you just can't get away from those hovering, bomb-spitting nasties.

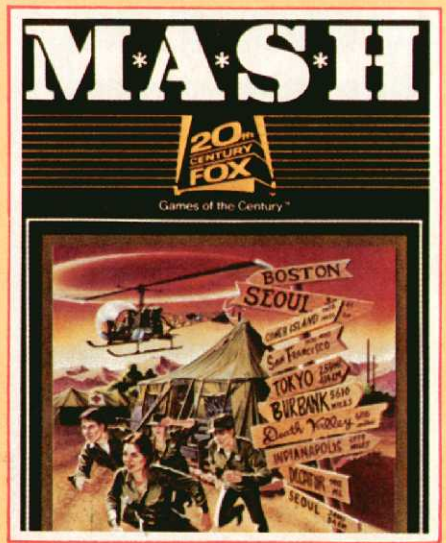
For the next six months, however, Imagic is concentrating on bolstering its Intellivision-compatible line with titles such as **Swords & Serpents** (in which some exciting audio is finally *without* a voice module), **Dragonfire, Ice Trek** and **Trucking.**



CRYPTS OF CHAOS



FLASH GORDON



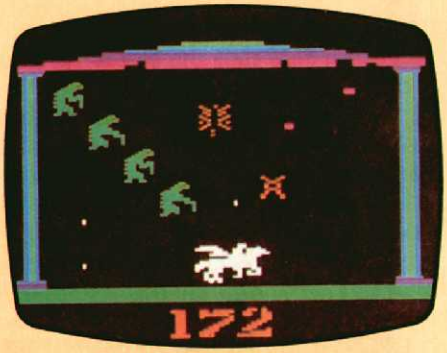
M*A*S*H

The two titles that drew the most interest were **Safecracker** and **Dracula.** The former is perhaps the most anti-social videogame ever to be created. Although a "blast" to play, the concept of intentionally blowing up policemen and their vehicles may draw fire from the killjoys and videogame-haters out there, and peace officers may be justifiably concerned.

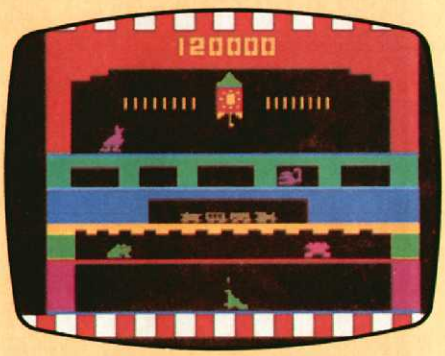
Dracula is a graphic phenomenon with play-value that just won't quit. Unlike ColecoVision's game about the Lord of the Undead, however, Imagic's version places gamers in the role of vampire, rather than the vampire hunter. Players must seek out human

POLARIS

IMAGIC DRAGONFIRE (2600)

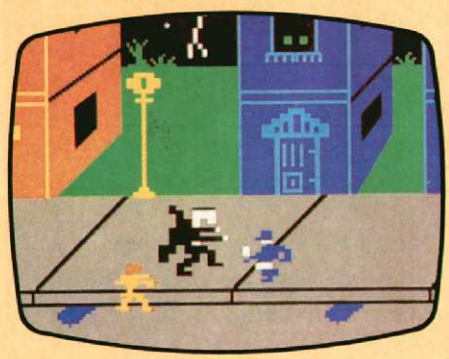


ESCAPE FROM ARGOS (2600)

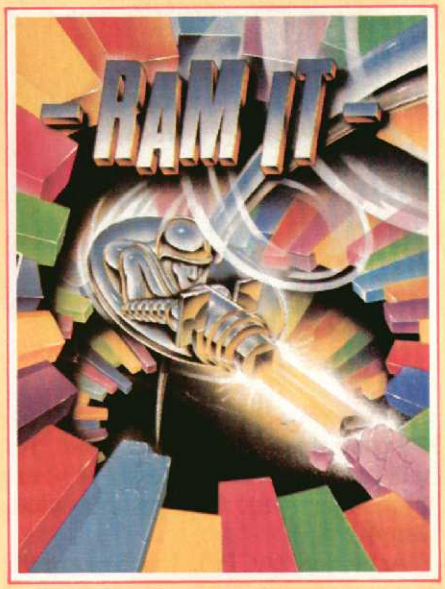


SHOOTING GALLERY (2600)

IMAGIC DRAGONFIRE (INTELLIVISION)



DRACULA (IMAGIC FOR INTELLIVISION)



RAM IT

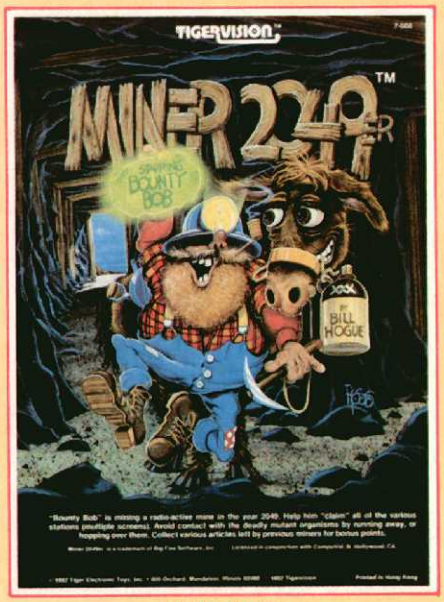
victims for points while avoiding the policeman with the wooden stake and the white wolf. While it's true that the character of Dracula has now become something of a comic character to today's kids — a cross between SCTV's "Count Floyd" and a breakfast cereal trademark — whether or not you wish to role-play the part of a murderer of living beings may be questionable.

On the 2600 side, watch for **Escape from Argos** (featuring both Jason, the Argonaut, and Pegasus, the winged-horse), the kideogame **Shooting Gallery** and **Sky Patrol,** a WWI observation balloon simulation.

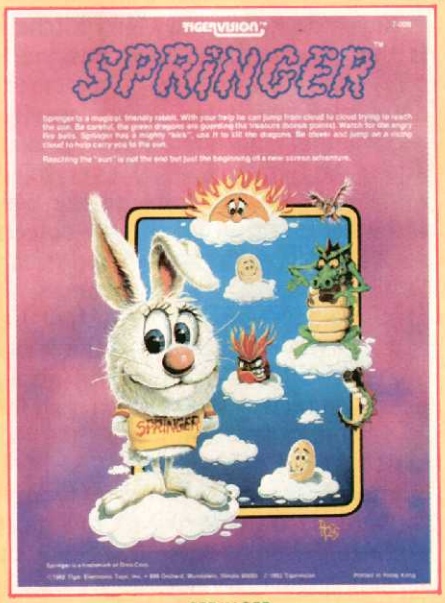
U.S. Games is in the pink — pink as in Pink Panther, that is. The lovable cartoon character has been licensed for use in a series of videogames. The first two will be **The Trail of the Pink Panther.** The publisher reports that the Panther titles will feature improved graphics through the use of extra chips in the cartridge.

Atari, as usual, plans an ambitious schedule of releases for both the 2600 and 5200 videogame systems. By the time you read this, **Ms. Pac-Man, Centipede,** and **Dig-Dug** should be available in most stores. Coming to market next will be **Kangaroo, Jungle Hunt, Phoenix, RealSports Tennis,** and **RealSports Soccer.** Looking especially good in pre-production are *Ms. Pac-Man,* highlighted by much better visuals than on last year's 2600 edition of **Pac-Man,** and **Phoenix,** the first home version of the Centuri multi-screen coin-op space blast-'em-up.

Many of the same titles, though naturally in enhanced form, will also soon be available for the Atari 5200 "third generation" videogame system.



MINER 2049er



SPRINGER

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-John Anderson,
Creative Computing

"All are excellent versions of the arcade games with super graphics and sound."

-Mark Benioff
A.N.A.L.O.G.

"The graphics display, sounds and game logic are so close to the original, that you might find yourself looking for the coin slot on your computer."

-Gary and Marcia Rose

"'Deluxe Invaders' is by far the best Space Invaders program ever released for a personal computer."

-Leigh Goldstein,
Electronic Games

Roklan Software

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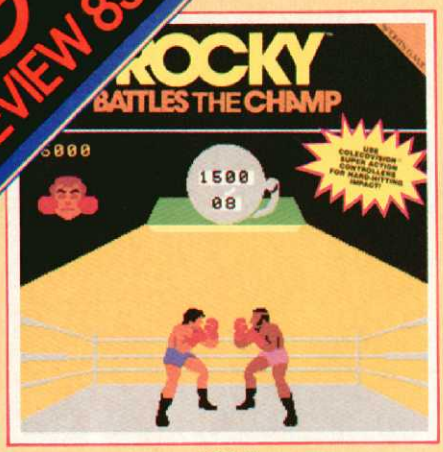
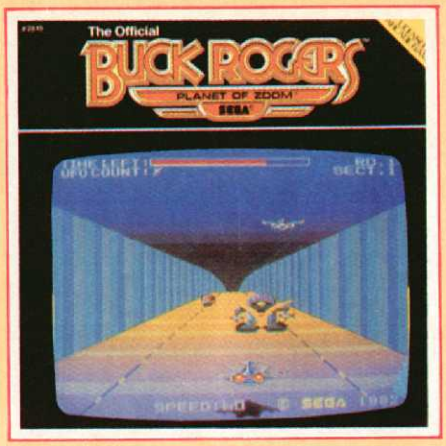


ROCKY



BUCK ROGERS

SWORD OF THE SORCERER

Following the successful introduction of **Defender** and *Centipede* this past winter, Atari is continuing to ride the enthusiasm for home editions of coin-op games with **Qix, Kangaroo,** *Dig-Dug,* **Jungle Hunt, Pole Position, Space Dungeon,** and **Vanguard.** In addition, look for a trio of *RealSports* games — **Tennis, Basketball** and **Baseball.**

Coleco has heard wails from its 600,000 or so ColecoVision owners concerning the need for more cartridges for the "third wave" system. Approximately 15 new titles will be released during the spring and summer, with an equal number of additional new games hitting the shelves in time for holiday gift-giving. Some of the most intriguing titles include **Victory, Looping, Pepper II, Slither** and **Mr. Do** from coin-op-land. There'll be baseball and football games, adventures based on "Tunnels and Trolls" and "Swords and Sorcery" and a boxing simulation titled **Rocky Battles the Champ.** Other goodies include a *Slither* cartridge packed with the company's roller controller, a Ken Uston-inspired blackjack tutor and the first of a series, starring space hero Buck Rogers. And, of course, there are the previously mentioned games for use with the Super Game Module #3.

Coleco won't be neglecting fans of their cartridges for the 2600 and Intellivision systems. 2600-compatible cartridges scheduled include: **Donkey Kong Junior, Looping, Mr. Do, Zaxxon** and **Turbo.** Intellivision's line-up is even more impressive: **Donkey Kong Junior, Looping, Pepper II, Mr. Do, Turbo, Mouse Trap, Zaxxon, Lady Bug, Venture, Cosmic Avenger** and **Smurf Rescue.**

Sega has been content to license its coin-op games for translation into home cartridges until now, but the manufacturer now plans to enter the home arcade field with a bang. Fifteen games, mostly tied in with well-known movies or popular commercial arcade machines, comprise the initial offering. Some projected game titles are **War of the Worlds, Pac-Scan, Dragonslayer, Mission Impossible** and several cartridges each involving "Star Trek" and "Buck Rogers".

CBS Videogames has new entries brightened by improved graphics made possible by the inclusion of additional RAM and ROM memory inside the cartridge. The first examples of these state-of-the-art cartridges will be **Wings,** a first-person airplane piloting and shooting game and **Tunnel Runner,** a three-dimensional maze that gives the player a view of the action you'd get if you were really running down those dangerous corridors. On the way from CBS Software, the CBS arm which makes games for the Atari computers, is **Mountain King.** This cartridge program is a cross between a climbing game and an adventure, and it packs the same punch as the first four games in this line, which includes **K-razy Shoot-out.**

Tigervision, an offshoot of Tiger Toys, shocked the videogaming world with a pair of incredible cartridge entries last year programmed by On-Line Systems, **Jawbreaker** and **Threshold.**

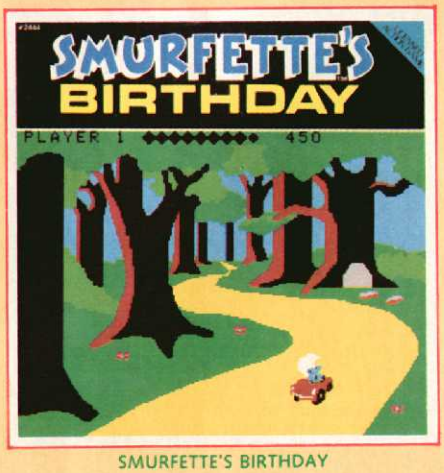
The next six months should bring Tigervision even greater glory with the release of the most eagerly-awaited title of the year, **Miner 2049er** in 2600 format. The classic Bill Hogue-designed program, which is being produced in at least 14 editions by different licensed publishers is the first 2600 game to show three fully-rendered scenario-playfields: the stair-step, the climb-and-slides and the transporter sequences. Each field offers new and interesting challenges and the graphics are more than worthy of the program being depicted.

Also watch for **River Rescue** and the Kangaroo-like **Springer,** a jumping game with cute little bunnies.

Spectravision is really spreading its wings with the introduction of its own SV-318 personal computer system, the first microcomputer to offer a built-in joystick. The system has 32K of ROM built-in and 32K RAM (upwardly expandable to 144K) and will offer a wide variety of low-cost peripherals.

Perhaps this computer's most intriguing peripheral, however, is the SV-603 ColecoVision game adapter that allows all compatible cartridges to run

FRENZY



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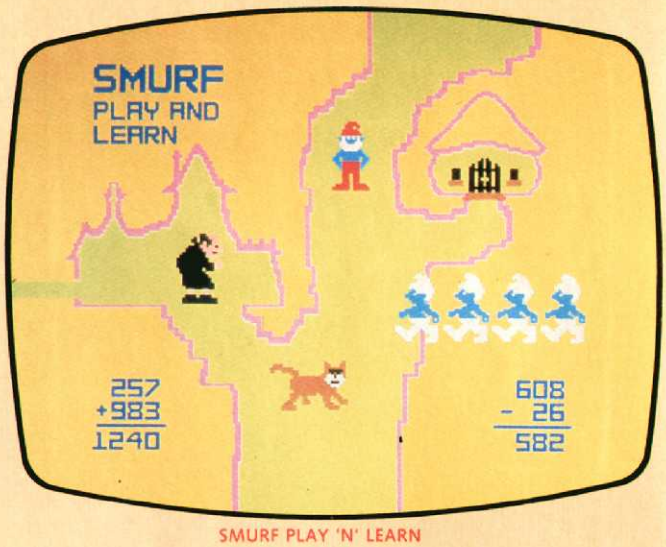
SKIING



SMURF PLAY 'N' LEARN

through the system! This adapter is scheduled to retail for under $70.00!

From a software point of view, the word is: 3-D! **Vortex** is the first home 3-D game and will come with its own pair of special glasses and will have compatible versions for the Atari computers, VIC-20 and TI 99/4A systems.

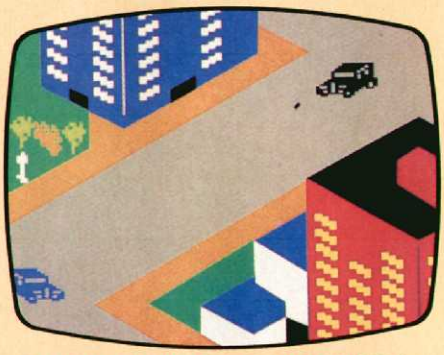
20th Century Fox, under its "Games of the Century" banner, is giving its heaviest promo to their 2600 version of **M*A*S*H,** a videogame version of the popular TV show. Other properties upcoming from the movie magnates include versions of the films "9 to 5", "The Earth Dies Screaming" (a 50's science fiction flick), "Flash Gordon", "Revenge of the Beefsteak Tomatoes", (a sequel to "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes" perhaps?), Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" and "Porky's".

TV translations include "Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea" and "Fall Guy." But the interest among many folks in the gaming community was spurred by the announcement of a **Save the Whales** videogame, with profits scheduled to help "Greenpeace," an environmentalist organization dedicated to helping the giant sea mammals.

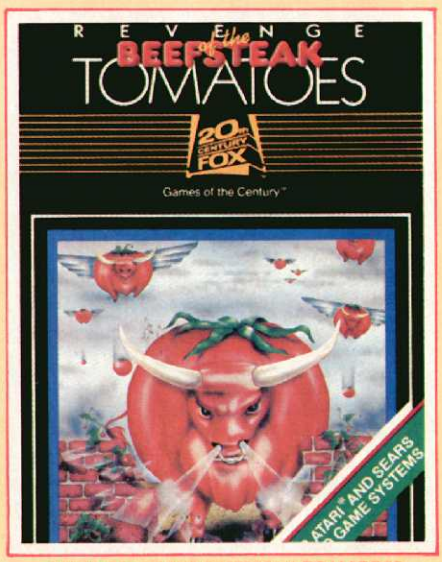
Data Age, meanwhile, is following up their Journey's **Escape** title with **Bermuda Triangle** and **Frankenstein's Monster,** a multi-level adventure game with an assortment of spiders and dark corridors leading to Mary Shelley's most famous literary creation.

In conjunction with the introduction of the Odyssey³, Odyssey will bring forth several cartridges designed to take advantage of the system's ability to present much more detailed background graphics than had previously been possible with the O² standard console, but are even better with the new one. Among the titles will be **Attack of the Timelord** and a new edition of **Baseball.** Devotees of the Master Strategy Series will be able to enjoy a new game before long. The title's exact wording is still up in the air, but it will be a detective simulation based on the characters created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his numerous accounts of Sherlock Holmes.

It would be next to impossible to even list *all* the software titles Mattel intends to publish for its new and old videogame and computer systems. The tidal wave of cartridges includes **Adventures of Tron, Star Strike** and **Air Raiders** for the VCS, and **Burger Time** and **In Search of the Golden Skull,** a multi-screen adventure contest.



SAFECRACKER (IMAGIC FOR INTELLIVISION)



REVENGE OF THE BEEFSTEAK TOMATOES

MicroFun, the company that has brought **Miner 2049Er** to the Apple II is about to do the same for the ColecoVision system. The game cartridge, which is slated to include a minimum of *eight* screens, should be available as you read this.

Starpath has lowered the price of the Supercharger to less than $45 and will concentrate on increasing its software library, including the introduction of a group of games for use with the Atari 400/800/1200XL computers. These computer programs will, at first, be primarily composed of translations of some of the 2600-cassettes already produced by Starpath. Most likely to jump over to the computer are: **Escape from the Mindmaster, Dragonstomper** and **Communist Mutants from Space.** The company is a little tight-lipped about plans for the Supercharger games, but one will definitely be **Killer Satellites,** a space arcade game in which the player must defend against renegade attackers from the void.

If your head is starting to buzz a bit from reading about all these titles, you might as well relax, because you're not alone. The gaming community will be bombarded with more hardware and software than ever before over the next 12 months. This preview is meant to hit only some of the high spots. Keep watching the pages of **Electronic Games** for more detailed information about upcoming games.

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PROGRAMMABLE PARADE

Bounce with Barnum for Video Circus Fun!

By ARNIE KATZ and BILL KUNKEL

P.T. BARNUM'S ACROBATS

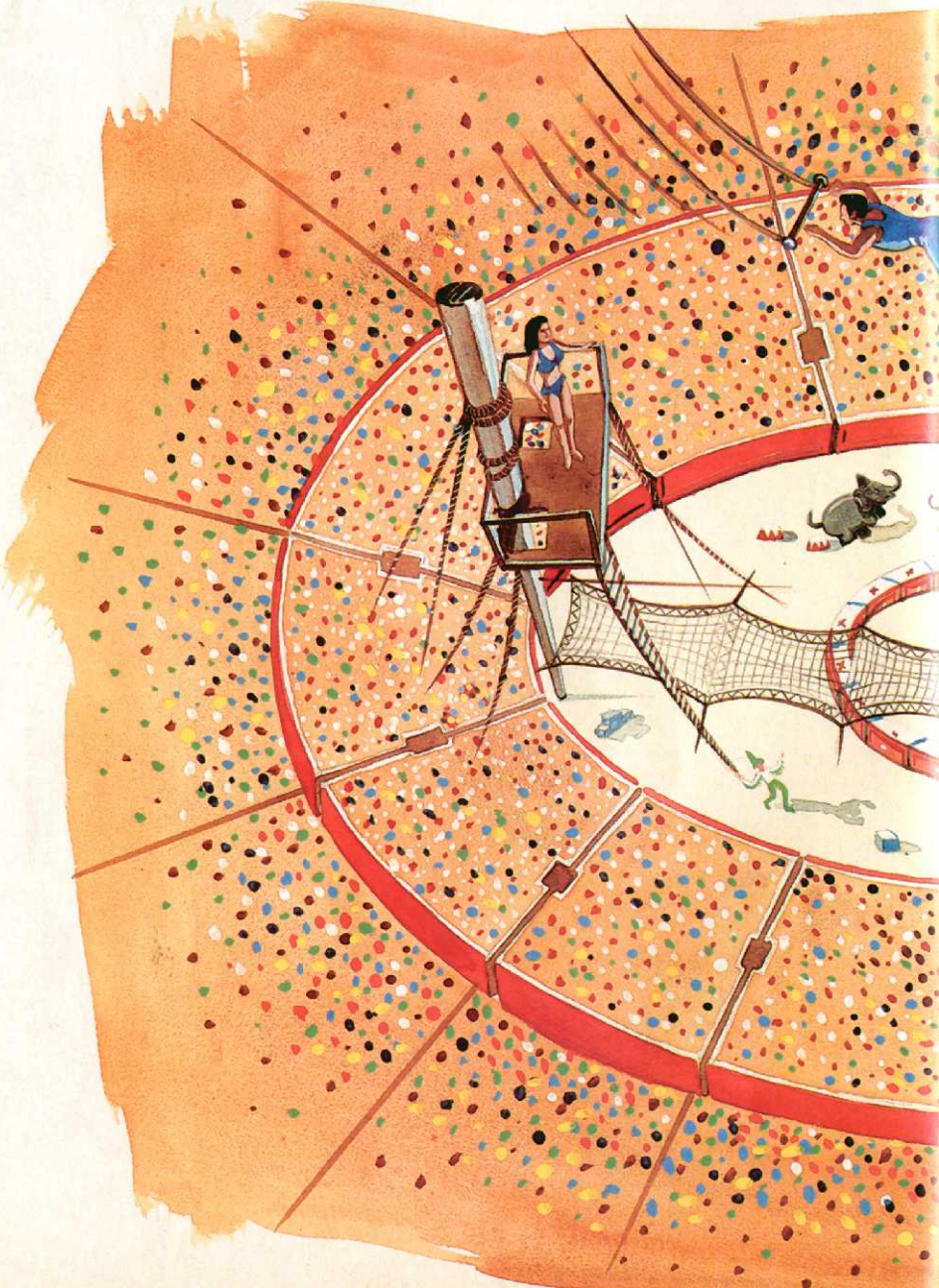
Odyssey/Odyssey²
(Voice module optional)

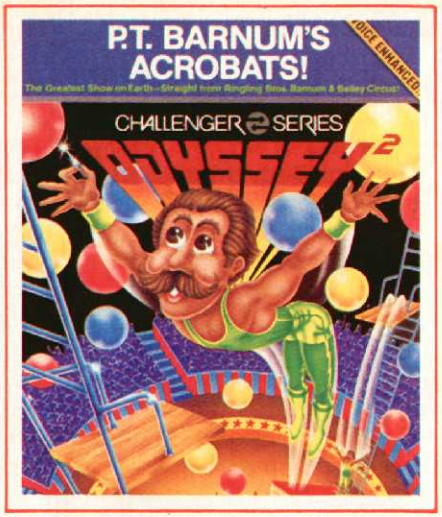
This is Odyssey's entry in the balloon-bashing game division, and it's a pretty healthy specimen of the breed. It boasts most of the features which have made cartridges like Astrocade's **Clowns and Balloons** and Atari's **Circus Atari** quite popular with home arcaders in recent years, and adds a few interesting ingredients of its own to the electronic stew.

In **P.T. Barnum's Acrobats,** one or two players attempt to roll up points by using the on-screen balancing act as a means of bursting the balloons which float in three horizontal bands around the top of the playfield. The joystick (the right-handed one is used in solitaire versions) moves a teeter-board back and forth along the bottom boundary of the display. Pushing the action button initiates the action by causing a video acrobat, standing on a raised platform at the left edge of the screen, to launch into the air. The gamer must then position the board so that the acrobat lands on the high (empty) end of the board.

The force of one circus performer hitting the board sends his partner, previously standing on the low end, skyward toward the ranks of point-scoring targets. If the acrobat hits one balloon, there's always a chance that momentum will continue to carry him across the screen, and enable him to puncture one or more additional spheres in the process. Naturally, you'll want to position the teeter-totter so that the performer comes down on the high end of the board; the original acrobat who started the whole process can now get the chance to explode a few of the balloons, too.

Unlike other cartridges of this sort, *P.T. Barnum* limits the length of play by permitting the gamer only 10 jumps in which to score. The number of jumps remaining in the round is indicated by the large numeral shown at the bottom-center of the screen. The score is displayed in the lower right corner and rolls over after "999". The



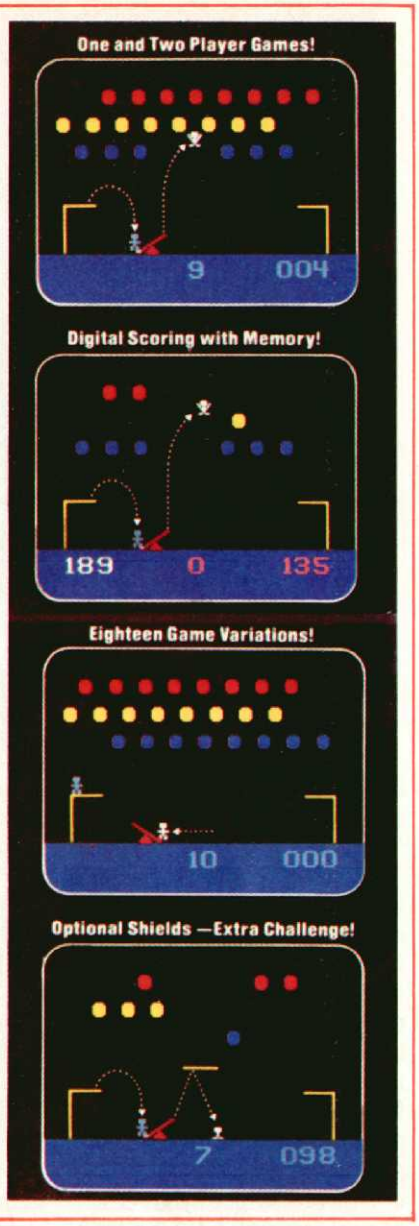

P.T. BARNUM'S ACROBATS!
VOICE ENHANCED
The Greatest Show on Earth—Straight from Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus!
CHALLENGER 2 SERIES
ODYSSEY 2

P.T. BARNUM'S ACROBATS

lowest rank of balloons (red) contains two-point targets, the yellow balloons of the middle row are worth four points, and the uppermost blue balloons count six points each. When a player clears an entire row, there's a bonus of 15-25 points depending on the row involved, and a completed row resets automatically so the scoring can continue.

P.T. Barnum's Acrobats provides for solo play and two forms of two-player action. Electronic ringmasters can either alternate after each and every jump, or only when the opponent's acrobat misses the teeterboard. Within these three major variations, there are five options which consist of various combinations of stationary or moving balloons, with stationary or moving shields.

If *P.T. Barnum's Acrobats* doesn't make enough noise for your taste, you can turn it into a regular chatterbox by plugging the cartridge into Odyssey's Voice speech synthesis module. Your reward will be a steady stream of patter that includes timing cues and both good *and* bad advice.



P.T. BARNUM

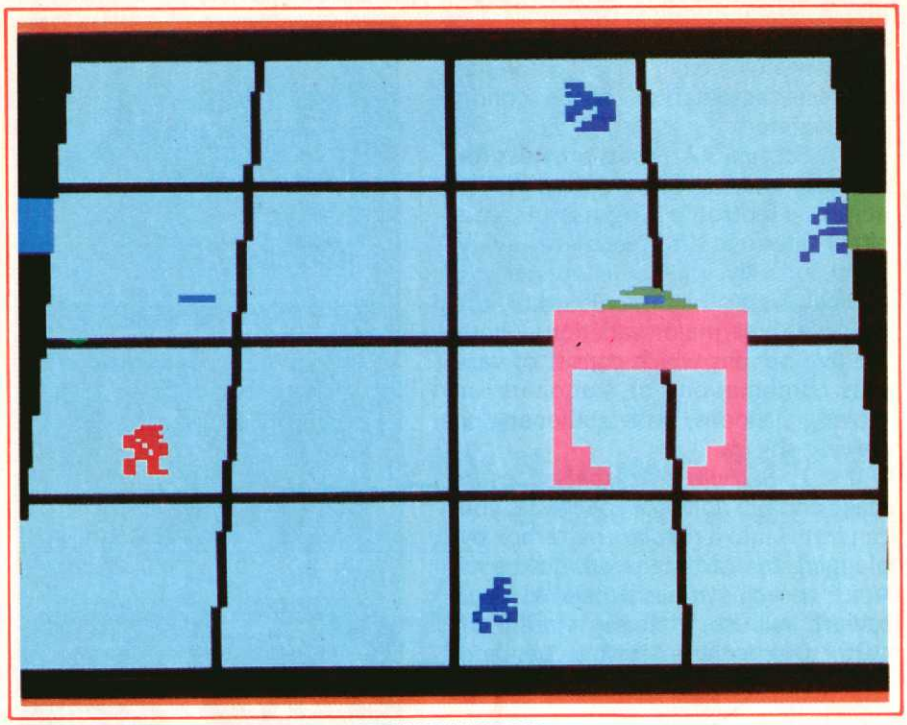
There's nothing startlingly new about this game, but it does bring a brand of action to the Odyssey² that the system had previously lacked. A "must buy" for owners of this game-playing machine.

TRON DEADLY DISCS

Mattel/Intellivision

Critics may carp at the scripting and characterizations found in Disney Studios' "Tron", but there's no question that this movie represents the first time the videogame experience has been translated to the silver screen. "Tron" took our innermost imaginings and made them tangible and real.

Now things have come full circle, since "Tron" has become the theme for a surprising number of electronic games. One of the most interesting is **Tron Deadly Discs,** which is closely



TRON DEADLY DISCS

based on the super-frisbie match that takes place near the beginning of the film.

This solo contest can be played at any of four speeds, ranging from a rather pokey pace that should be great for beginners learning the ropes. Unlike many home videogames, this one does *not* advance to a higher difficulty level during play by simply speeding up. Instead, the on-screen hero must fight stiffer competition, including purple warriors, leader warriors and guards, as the point total mounts. The changes in difficulty can be somewhat abrupt, so don't be surprised to find your score sticking at certain key milestones for several games until your skill improves enough to allow you to push even further.

The red on-screen Tron figure must combat waves of three warriors on the battle grid, which is shown in three-quarters perspective on the TV screen. A warrior hit by one of Tron's flying flapjacks is eliminated, but it'll reappear in 10 seconds if all three attackers aren't cleared within that interval.

One measly hit won't finish off Tron, though. He can, at the beginning of the game, take a total of three hits from *each wave* before biting the dust. As the game progresses, Tron's resistance to injury grows. After 100,000 points, for instance, Tron will be able to endure five hits.

Your on-screen representative can also recover from damage, given a little time. Tron can be healed of one disc hit every four seconds. Purple (bulldog) and orange (guard) warriors share this ability.

As mentioned earlier, the blue warriors who attack Tron during the early rounds are by far the least powerful adversaries. Purple warriors, which enter the fray next, are slower and less accurate shooters, but take two hits to de-rezz. Once you pass the 10,000-point plateau, expect to see leader warriors. Though these can be dispatched with a single well-placed disc, their presence on the screen makes every enemy warrior move more quickly and aim the discs more accurately. Once you attain a score of one million, orange guards with paralyzer sticks burst through the doors and try to stun Tron into submission. If one of the white rods touches the hero, the game ends immediately.

Tron throws a disk by pushing the appropriate portion of the controller overlay provided with the cartridge. Pushing the center button while there's a disc in Tron's hand causes him to use the weapon as a shield to block a toss from a warrior. If Tron is empty-handed, he simply ducks to avoid the missile.

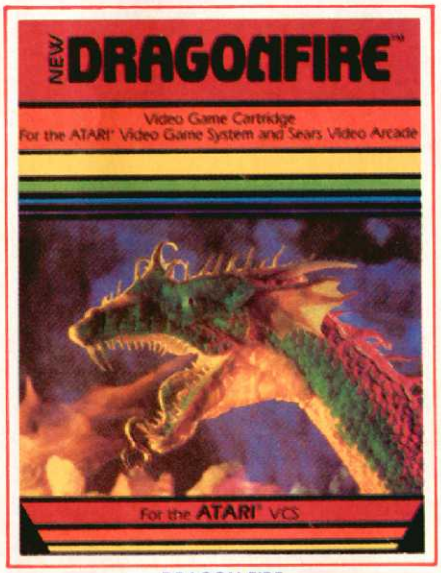
Tron Deadly Discs is an excellent action cartridge for the Intellivision.

DRAGONFIRE

Imagic/Atari VCS

Suddenly, the world of programmable videogames has filled up with "dragons" faster than you can gobble a power pellet. Variations of the "sword and sorcery" theme have become available from virtually every software producer in the industry.

For fans of dragons who aren't so much into adventuring as they are lovers of fast-action videogames, Imagic's **Dragonfire** should be right up their drawbridge. This is, like **Cosmic Ark,** a dual-stage contest. The first phase of the quest involves getting into the dragon's lair and over the moat that surrounds it. Your caped prince — operated via joystick — would be able to sprint right into the dragon's den but for one little trifle — fireballs. The dragon doesn't much care for visitors, especially those who plan on stealing its treasures, so it sends out volleys of flaming spheres on two different horizontal levels. To escape the high-flying fireballs, the prince must duck. The low-moving sizzlers can be leapfrogged. Sometimes, unhappily, they appear simultaneously. In this case, the prince can either retreat back into his own castle on-screen right, or simply wait a few seconds. The higher fireball will then accelerate once it passes the halfway point on the playfield, so a little patience can get you into the lair a lot quicker than wild abandon.



DRAGON FIRE

Once across the threshold, the playfield transforms into a free-form "grab-it-and-run" treasure hunt, with beautiful harps of glistening gold, treasure chests and a gorgeous variety of other prizes.

The booby prize in this otherwise delightful scenario is the dragon scurrying madly back and forth at the base of the playfield, spitting fire-globes up at the bold prince in salvos. There is a

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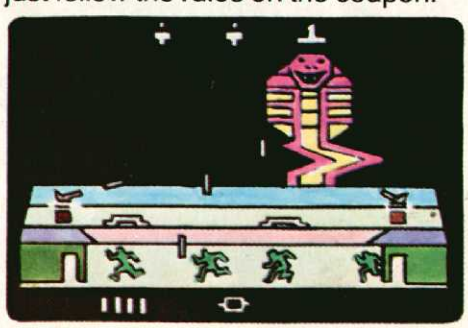

G.I. JOE BLACK COBRA CONTEST

Rules: All players who reach the black cobra in the one player game will have their names published in *Electronic Games* magazine and will receive a baseball hat with a black cobra on it. To receive your hat you must submit 1) a *color* photograph of the black cobra on the screen with your signature, name and address on the back, 2) the proof of purchase from G.I. Joe video game rule book, and 3) this certificate or a facsimile. All entries are subject to validation by Ventura Associates, Inc., an independent judging organization. Their decisions are final. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Offer good only in the U.S. Void where taxed or otherwise restricted. Offer expires July 31, 1983. All entries must be postmarked by that date.

Important Instructions for Taking Picture: In order to take a picture of the black cobra, when you reach him, you must let your G.I. Joes get captured. Otherwise you'll proceed back to the 1st level. *The shield must not be touching either flatgun* in the picture. It's best to start the shield to the far left and take the picture as it floats to the right, *before* it touches the gun on the right. DO NOT USE A FLASH.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail entries to: G.I. Joe Black Cobra Contest
P.O. Box 608
Lowell, IN 46356

I authorize my name be published in *Electronic Games* Magazine.

Signature _____ Signature of Parent or Guardian (required for minors) _____

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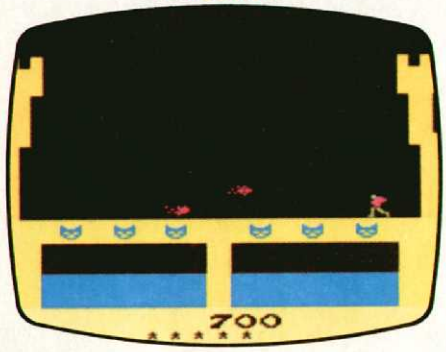
DRAGON FIRE



single "safe house" on the field, and once all of the goofies have been gathered up, a second house appears in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. The prince's final task is to get his booty into this second location before being par-broiled.

The dragons come in three colors, green, gold and red, each meaner — and speedier — than its predecessor. The graphics and sounds on both playfields simply sparkle, with designer Bob Smith's initial Imagic program a dandy, in terms of both looks and play value.

COMMUNIST MUTANTS FROM OUTER SPACE

Starpath/for use with Atari VCS and Supercharger

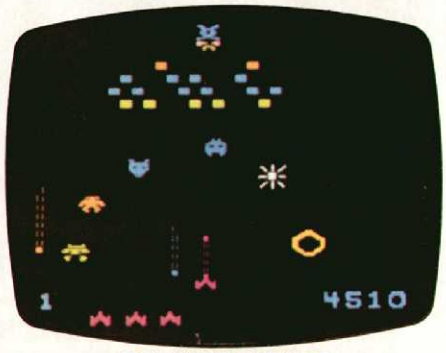
One of the electronic gaming industry's quieter revolutions had recently occured when a company originally dubbed "Arcadia", now known as "Starpath", released their Supercharger. This remarkable new device plugs directly into the VCS cartridge slot. Its wire and male plug are then inserted into the earphone jack on any audio-cassette recorder. The software comes on cassettes — making them far less expensive than cartridges — and have more room for both programming code as well as increased screen RAM, the thing that the VCS most notably lacks and the reason so many of the VCS games have a "blinking" effect.

One thing you can be sure of is that Starpath's games have plenty of movement, and nary a flicker to be seen. Their initial titles, **Phaser Patrol** (included with the Supercharger), **Fireball, Suicide Mission** and the like, keep the screen hopping with moving play objects, and **Communist Mutants** is, perhaps, the busiest of the bunch.

It is, of course, difficult to *dislike* a game entitled *Communist Mutants from Outer Space*, especially when it comes packaged with a hysterical piece of poster-quality art such as the hammer and sickle-wielding aliens seen on the game's cover. It is even more difficult to dislike after a quick round or two of game play.

The first thing the player will notice, however, is that the title is mostly tongue-in-cheek, and the game itself is a standard outer-space shoot-out with dive-bombing attackers cut from the **Galaxian** mold. The second thing our ardent arcader will pick up on is the incredible speed at which the attackers move and the quick response of the horizontally-moveable cannon at the base of the playfield.

The object of the game, though, goes beyond mere sweep and slam action. At the top of the screen are the mother-mutants, constantly regenerating their brood. It is these targets which must be eliminated as quickly as possible, and this is no snap, fellow



COMMUNIST MUTANTS

gamers. So whether players choose guided, unguided, sweeping breakthrough missiles or simple one-shot-one-kill-type weaponry, the challenge here is considerable.

Using the joystick as an input device, players can select nearly a dozen levels — more than enough to keep even William F. Buckley busy for several months of good play.

CARNIVAL

Coleco/ColecoVision

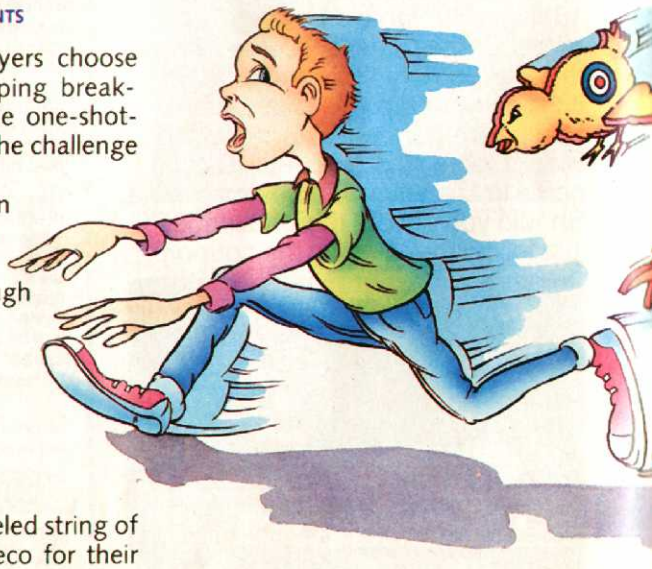
The latest in the bejeweled string of arcade replicas from Coleco for their own programmable system — with VCS and Intellivision versions also available—is Sega's classic video-game shooting gallery, **Carnival.**

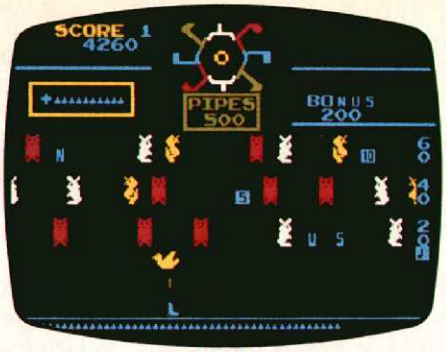
Against a stark black backdrop that highlights the marvelously colored simulated-tin targets, three rows of objects move in serpentine fashion back and forth across the playfield. The benign animals — owls and bunnies — are worth progressively fewer points as they drop from top row to middle to bottom — then recycle again from the highest level.

Bonus targets consist of blue boxes inscribed with the numbers "5" and "10", indicating that a hit will earn the player that same number of bonus bullets. The number of cartridges remaining are displayed at the bottom of the playfield, and as long as there are bullets in the gamer's horizontally-maneuverable pistol, play continues.

Non-benign targets consist solely of the ducks, which must be hit before they reach the end of their circuit on the bottom row. If the duck gets this far, it takes wing for a couple of quick forays back and forth over a short range before dive-bombing the remaining bullets and gobbling down a slew of the precious ammo.

Nobody can say there are a lack of targets available to *Carnival* fans. The top of the playfield, from left to right, starts off with a mystery rectangle. Throughout the game, plus and minus point values and bullets (positive or negative) appear in this box. The number of bonus points or bullets constantly diminishes, the longer it takes to hit the rectangle. If the mystery box is accidentally hit when a negative factor is displayed, they are subtracted instantly.





CARNIVAL

Don't baby the first level, either, despite the fact that the racks become progressively more difficult, because the longer it takes to clear the field, the more the ducks begin to proliferate.

The final targets are the clay pipes, mounted on a spinning wheel at the top-center of the screen.

Everything a player could want in an electronic shooting gallery is represented with a graphic and audio magnificence — the caliope music that churns throughout the game can be snuffed out with a shot to the music box and can be restarted the same way. Targets are hit with a metallic clang, pipes burst with a muffled explosion and bonus points are added up with a charming digital clatter. *Carnival* is a letter-perfect recreation of the arcade original that is not to be missed.

VANGUARD

Atari/Atari VCS

Whoa and yo! After several recent disappointments from their young designers, Atari's VCS people have done one fantastic job on their home translation of Centuri's multi-scenario space blast-'em-up, **Vanguard.** Using simplified imagery to marvelous effect, arcaders will quickly recognize the tunnel diagram that opens a game consisting of trips through the Mountain, Rainbow, Stick, Striped and Bleak Zones, before getting to meet the horrendously unfriendly alien mastermind — Gond himself.

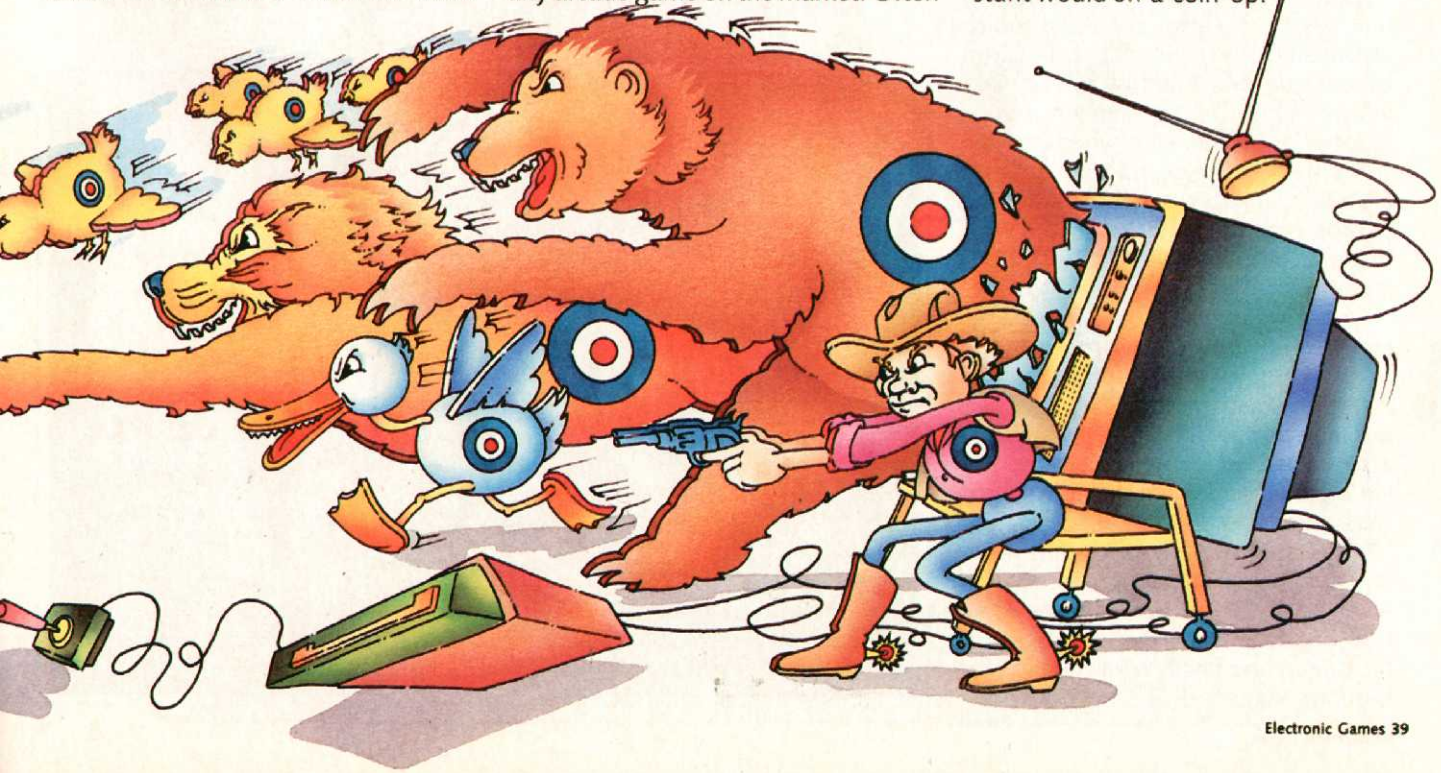
The various zones are both horizontal as well as vertical, with different strategies to develop in dealing with each of them. Multicolored, block-like graphics set off the more realistically rendered alien attack vessels (Mist ships, Helms, Harleys, Paynes), the well named rover which patrols the Striped Zone, and the unforgettable Kemlus — claw-shaped nasties that engulf the gamer's ship, then strip away points before swallowing it whole.

In the Mountain Zones, ships randomly encounter energy pods. Cut your automatic fire — which will be discussed in greater detail later — and swoop down over the pod. The ship will then become energized and able to destroy any attacking craft merely by ramming it. Energizing is signalled by a brief burst of music, and a blinking light indicates that the power is fading.

Even without power pods, however, the Vanguard is not exactly cosmic chopped liver. The front cannon fires automatically, and quadra-directional fire can be achieved by moving the joystick in the desired direction. It's this wild and wooly action that certifies *Vanguard* as a first-rate translation and makes it as much fun to play as any arcade game on the market. Often dealing in cramped quarters — the Stick Zone comes complete with picket-like protrusions at the top and base of the playfield — gamers will have to blend a mastery of steering and fire-control to really do well here.

The packaging and documentation are first-rate — typical Atari quality. A short piece of fiction sets up the game's context, in which the player has just joined the Vanguard elite and is in the mysterious space tunnel in search of what may or may not be the mythical city dubbed Mystery, rumored to be guarded by a typically unfriendly giant known as Gond. Each section of the tunnel and city are then explained, with profuse illustrations, and a potpourri of strategy tips at the end, most of which ranges from the quite useful ("firing slows you down to half-speed") to the redundant or obvious ("avoid getting caught between two balloons").

Another excellent touch that should be mentioned is the first programmable videogame's use of the "continued play" option. As in arcades, for example, it is a common practice in multi-scenario games for the player to drop in a token after a play has ended and pick up the action at that point, rather than starting all over again. Once the player has exhausted his supply of ships and the game concludes, a message appears at the bottom of the playfield inquiring as to whether the player wishes to continue or restart the action. This is a marvelous touch and uses up a lot fewer quarters than the same stunt would on a coin-op.



STRATEGY

SESSION

By FRANK TETRO JR.

LADYBUG

Coleco/ColecoVision

In **Ladybug,** the gamer is cast in the role of a hungry, little bug-lette who must traverse a maze gobbling up dots, letters and hearts. To stop her in her quest are poisonous skulls which are deadly upon contact, and a quartet of ever-changing patrol insects that live in a central corral from which they emerge one at a time, whenever the timer (which speeds up as play goes along) completes a trip around the perimeter of the playfield. By the way, those skulls are also fatal to the guardian bugs.

Ladybug presents several challenges. The obvious one is to clear the maze of the flower-like dots before the insect enemies "getcha". Bonuses are available all over the place, however, in a pinball-style feature seldom used in videogame format. On the right side of the screen the words "Special" and "Extra" appear. Each rack offers three random letters which go through a sequence of three color changes. They turn briefly orange, then yellow for a bit longer, and finally revert to blue for the longest period of time before restarting the sequence. "Extra" must be spelled out in yellow, and results in the player being awarded a bonus bug. "Special" has to be spelled in orange, but the reward here is a free romp through a playfield full of bonus veggies. These vegetables also turn up, one kind for each rack, in the insect pen once it has been emptied of its resident guardians. There are also a trio of hearts, which must be consumed while blue and act as bonus score multipliers.

The main strategy involves mastering the game's major variation from the classic **Pac-Man** type maze chase: the maze is filled with swinging turnstile-doors which the ladybug can turn but the guardians can not pass. The guardians *are* programmed, however, to find their way to your little on-screen surrogate through an alternate opening as there is no way to totally block the ladybug from attack.

With the start of a new round, head straight up and eat the dots immediately surrounding the corral, as these will be the most difficult to reach later in the game.

Time is of the essence. Remembering the color-changing sequence, see if it is possible to sit right next to a letter needed in orange and still scoot over to a component from "Extra" after it has turned yellow. Also, eat the multiplier hearts as early as you can, thereby piling up triple points for most of the maze.

A nice way to pass the time is to find one of the several relatively "safe spots" in the maze right next to the corral, so that when all four critters have departed, your ladybug can slip right in and gobble up the bonus veggie. The veggie can only be replaced by the death (through skull poisoning, of course) of one of the roving insects. As

LADYBUG

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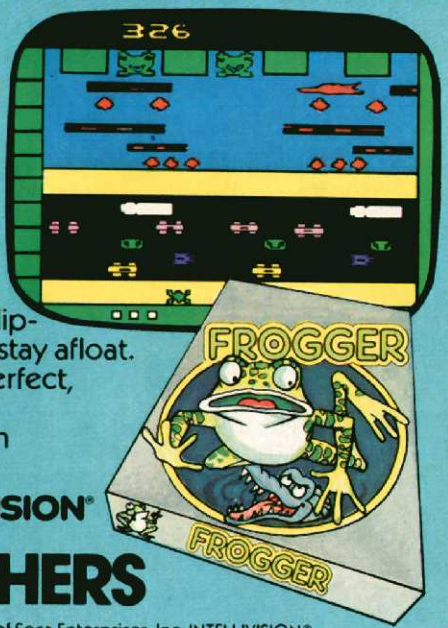

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PARKER BROTHERS

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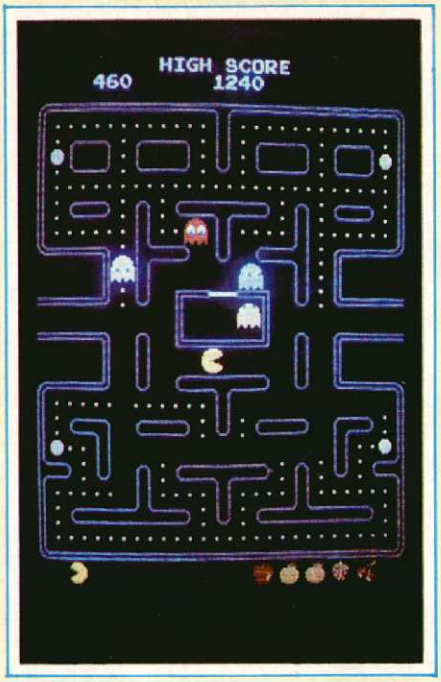


PAC-MAN

it dies, it will reappear in the corral and, after the timer has gone around, it will take off, leaving another bonus goodie.

When "Special" is hit, everything goes into hyperdrive. Music starts and vegetables start popping up all over the maze. No guardians to worry about now, just smoothly traverse the maze, constantly mobile, gobbling whatever pops up in your ladybug's path. Remember, you haven't got all day — there's a strict time limit for this vegetable harvest, so be quick!

If a guardian insect is on your tail, you'll notice that it is gaining speed on you rather rapidly. At this point, make for a gate immediately and put a turnstile between your lady and her pursuers.

Good luck, and happy gardening!

LOCK-N-CHASE

Mattel/Intellivision

Lock-n-Chase pits you, the no-good bank robber, against four persistent police officers. Your mission: rob the local bank, and escape uncaught.

You run along the maze-like corridors picking up gold coins and treasures. Occasionally, a money bag will appear in the middle vault, which is worth anywhere from 500 to 4000 points. Aside from dodging the good guys, you must also avoid getting cut off or trapped by vault doors which randomly open and close throughout the maze.

You have two offensive weapons. One is the escape tunnel which will appear on the left and right sides of the vault. Entering the left tunnel brings you back on the right side and vice-versa. The only problem is that the officers can use these tunnels, too. Your other weapon is the ability to lock doors behind you. You may lock a door where you see two lines on the walls. These doors will only remain locked temporarily, and you may only have two locked at any one time. If you can lock a policeman between two doors, you'll receive extra points.

Each gold coin is worth 20 points, and each money bag is worth progressively more. Four money bags will appear per maze. The first one is worth 500, then 1000, 2000 and finally 4000, *if* you can get all four.

Once you clear the maze of gold coins, both escape doors will unlock so you must leave through a door at which time you will be transported to another bank with treasures of a higher value.

You start the game with five lives and will receive an extra life at 20,000 points.

Once the game starts, head for the two corridors on either side of the money bag corridors. Clear these first before all the cops start out. If you wait, you will find it almost impossible to clear these corridors because there is no escape exits once you enter them.

From Gardens to Gangsters — A Look at the New Maze Games

The controls of the man are a little fussy in *Lock-n-Chase.* Make sure you push right if you want to go right because if you push diagonally by mistake, the man won't turn where you want him to.

Once a money bag appears, *try* to get to it as they are worth substantially more than anything else on the screen. However, if a police officer is patrolling the money bag vault, stay clear of it.

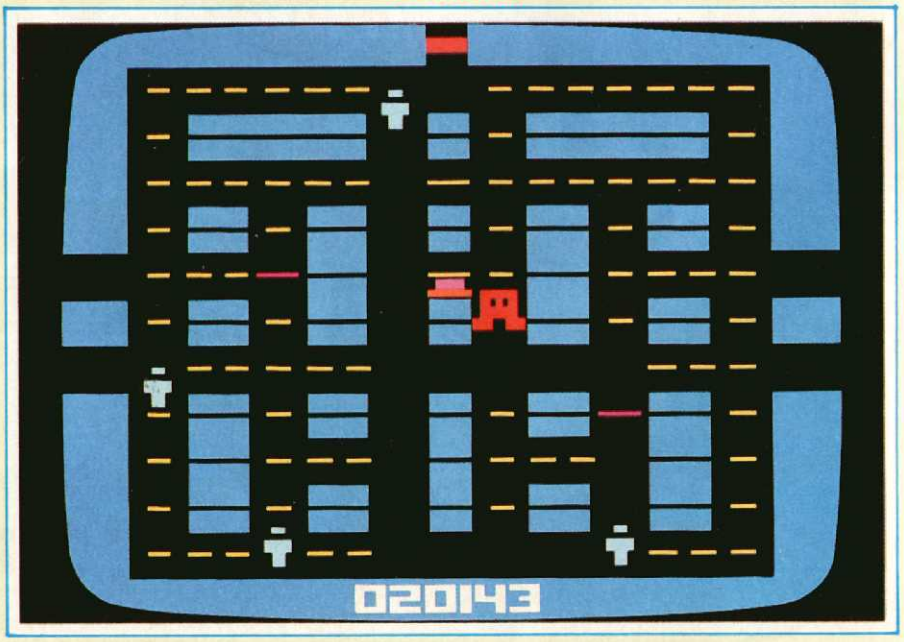
Every once in a while, a treasure will appear in the lower middle section of the screen right under the money bag vault. If you are close by, grab it for some extra points, but for heaven's sake, don't risk your life for it, it is not worth enough (unless you're up around maze five, at which point you should really go for it.)

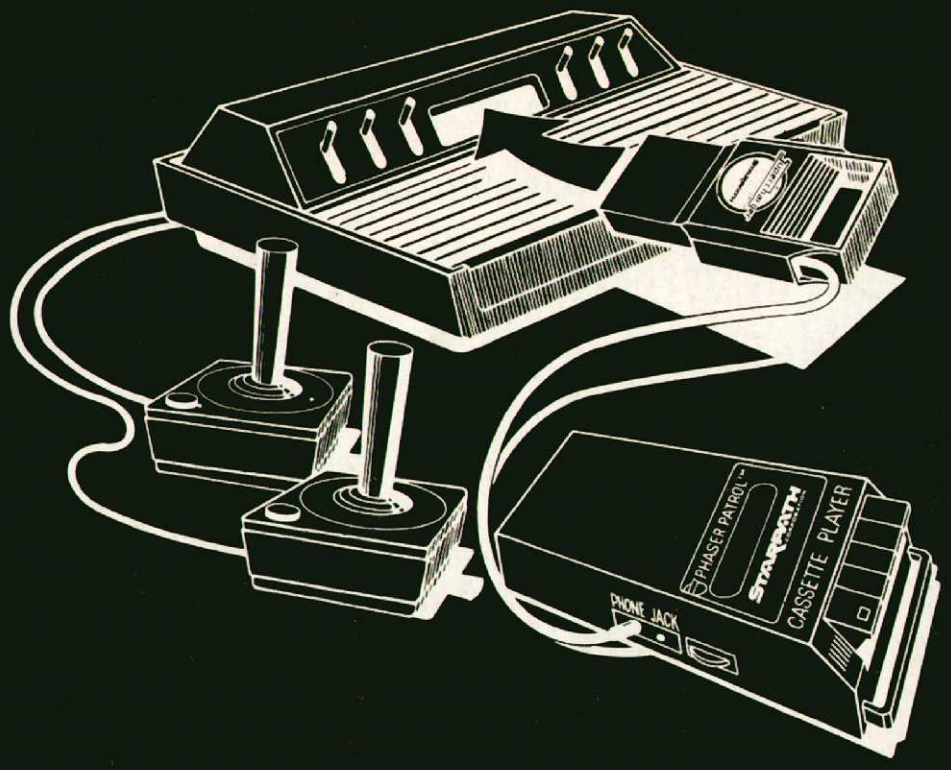
Hitting a money bag will freeze the cops. But this effect only lasts for about four seconds, so stay clear of them anyway. There are two sets of escape tunnels on the sides of the vault. One set is closed and the other is open. The closed set will alternate from top to bottom with each maze you clear.

Don't forget you must leave the vault via an escape hatch after you have picked up all the coins, or you won't move on to the next maze.

Another thing to remember is that no matter how good you are, the good guys always win. . .*eventually.* G

LOCK 'N CHASE





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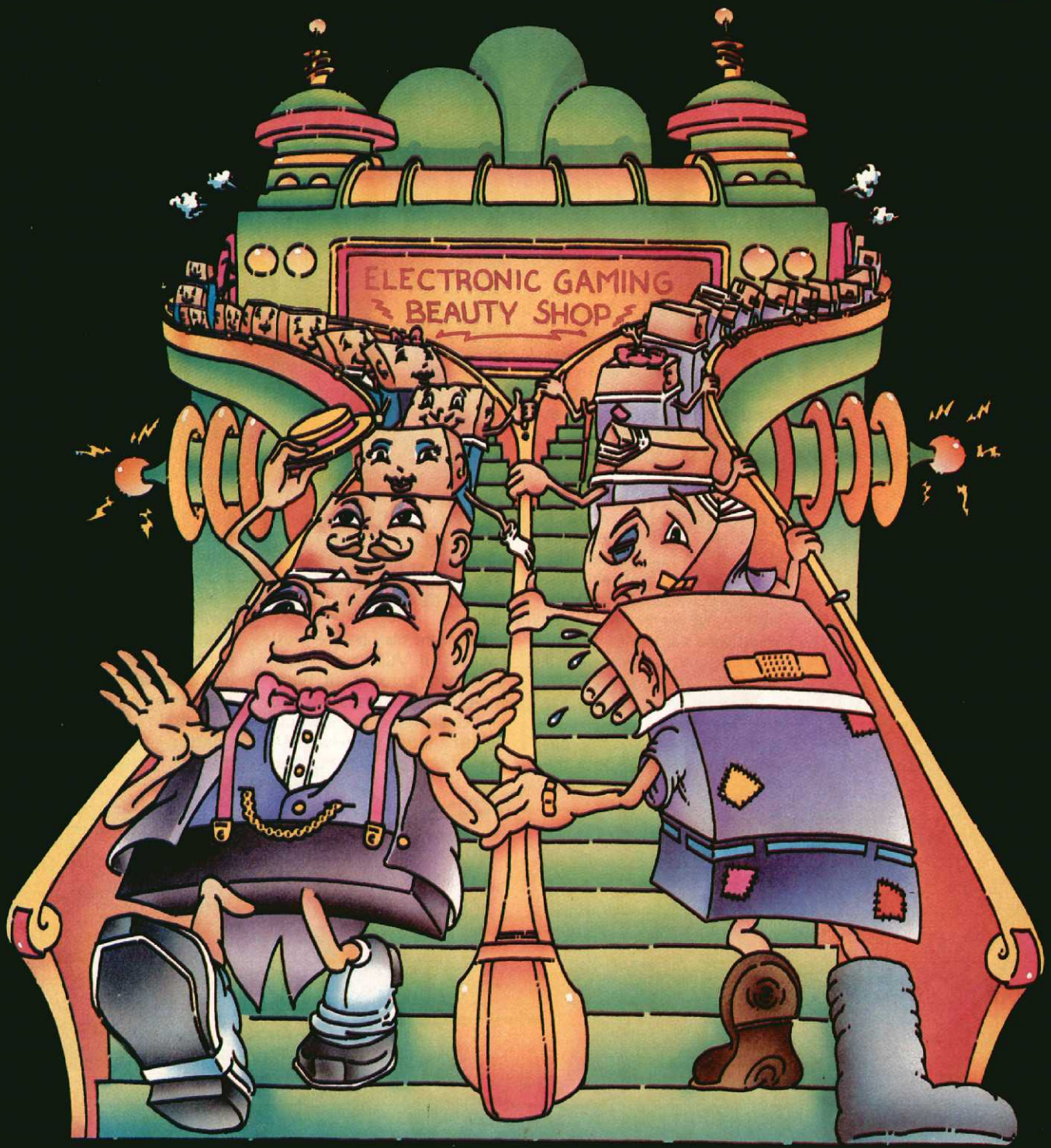
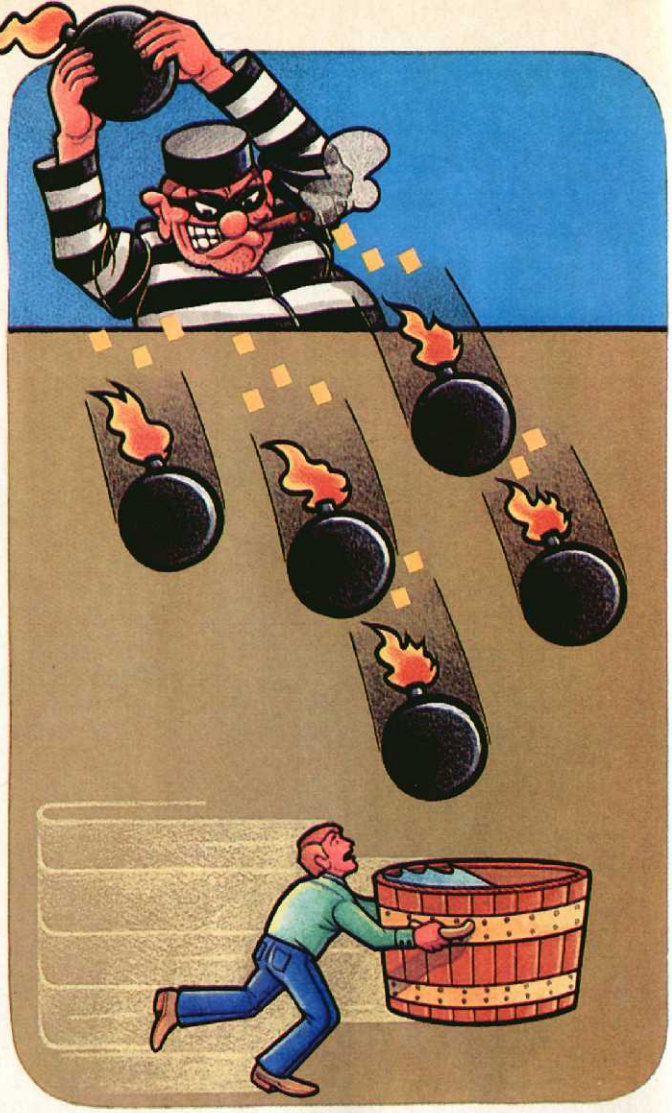
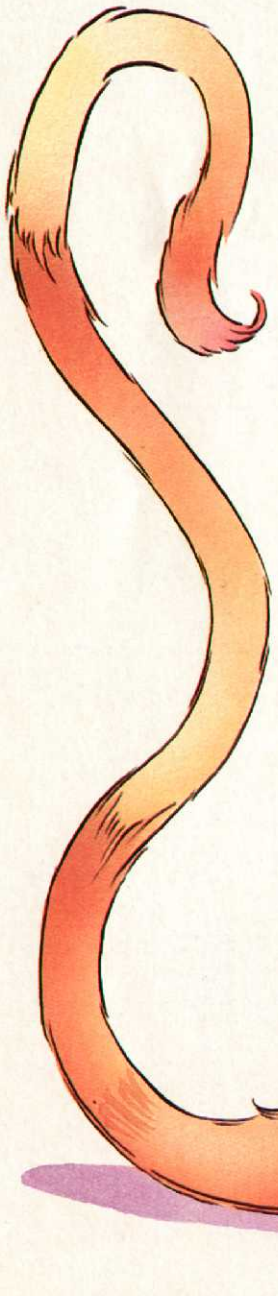
THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO
CUTE GAMES



HERE COME THE CARTRIDGE CUTIES





THE HOUSE THAT CHARM BUILT

Coin-ops have traditionally held graphic superiority over home arcade games. The use of high resolution monitors coupled with the availability of more memory in the pay-for-play units have given the commercial arcade machine some hefty advantages over home-screen cartridges.

Despite this state of affairs, it was Activision, an outfit exclusively devoted to the production of software for use in the home, which pioneered in the area of cute games. The company's design brain trust has always asserted the conviction that the way to make a good solid game into an outstanding one, is to enhance it with first-rate visual frills.

Freeway was probably the first true home arcade cute game. The lightly humorous visual treatment of both the chicken, and the vehicles which impede its progress across the multi-lane highway, keep the play mechanic from growing too grimly realistic.

Kaboom! may be the most successful VCS-compatible cute cartridge of all time. Again, the action is fast-paced and challenging, but it would be just another game without the alternately grinning and glowering bomber and the cartoonish explosive devices he lobs over the wall. In fact, this title is a fine example of what the right graphic treatment can accomplish for a basically interesting contest. *Kaboom!* has a play-routine that is remarkably similar to an old coin-op called **Avalanche.** The main difference: the quarter-snatcher didn't do much to delight the eye, and

attained only an indifferent reception from the public. *Kaboom!*'s frolicsome screen images encouraged the players to stick around long enough to get thoroughly involved in the action.

FROM ARCADE TO HOME

Though the first cute game from the home software companies, the coin-op manufacturers got on the bandwagon pretty quickly. These days, many of the most enticing home arcade cute games started life in the arcades.

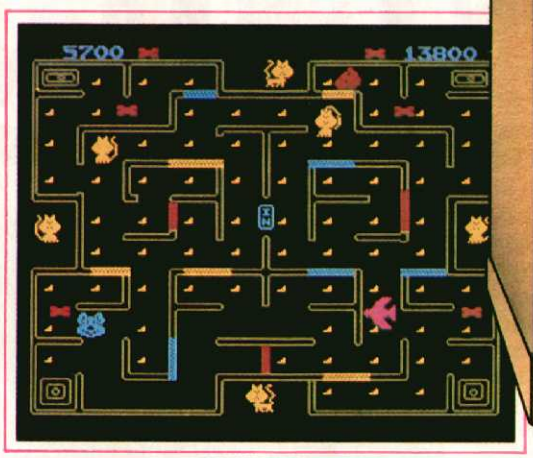
Although the appeal occasionally gets watered down too much in the translation, several software publishers have reaped big rewards with faithful translations of cute coin-ops.

Parker Brothers, for example, has done a simply magnificent job on the 2600 version of **Frogger.** Multi-part musical harmony and colorful graphics make this title a true delight for the senses. It all looks so lovable, that novices may at first forget to bear down on the challenging game under all the trimmings.

Coleco has done some exceptional work on translating cute games for its ColecoVision system. **Donkey Kong** and **Mouse Trap** are faithful to the coin-op machines which inspired them well as being outstanding examples of the way especially elaborate graphics can boost player interest. The expression upon the face of the gigantic ape in *Donkey Kong* and the light touch with which all of the principal characters are drawn, keeps the mood bubbly, reminding us that, after all, it's only a game. Similarly, the delicate, non-realistic slant of the artwork for *Mouse Trap* helps players remember that this is the stuff from Saturday morning cartoons, not the electronic version of Darwin's "survival of the fittest".

PRETTY AS A (MOVING) PICTURE

The coin-op industry now takes the lead in developing charm-packed contests, but the cartridge-makers for the

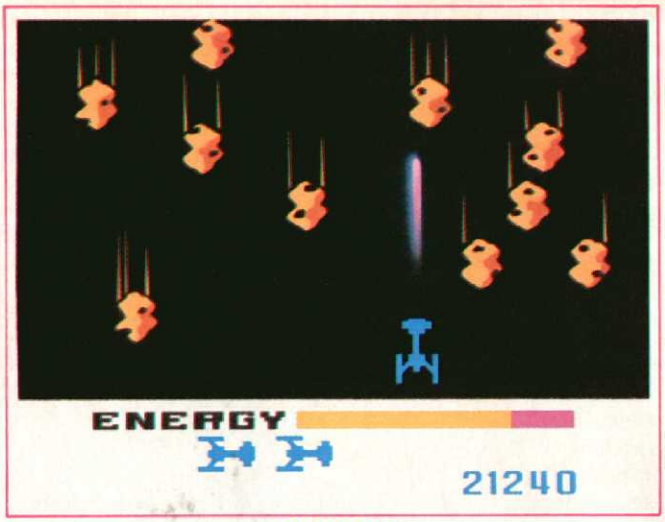


MOUSE TRAP

popular home systems are straining to stay competitive. Some of the most irrepressibly cute games can only be enjoyed on a home game-playing machine.

Activision has maintained its corporate reputation by releasing **Megamania,** the 1983 Arcade Award winner as Best Humorous Home Arcade Game. This send-up of more sober-sided invasion games represents a space pilot's nightmare, during which the ace gunner is assaulted by everything from french fried potatoes and hot dogs to used tires. The play-action is excellent, of course, but it's the unorthodox treatment of the visuals that makes this cartridge stand out from the rest of the pack.

U.S. Games has, with one or two exceptions like **Space Jockey** and **Robot Commando Raid,** concentrated on creating programs packed with boundless visual appeal. **Gopher** and **Eggomania** are only two examples of titles that combine the expected play value with the extra dimension of lovable visual images. When, in *Eggomania,* the arcader gets to turn the tables on the egg-throwing chicken, the sight of the beaten bird scurrying to the sidelines while trying to hold onto its pants at the same time, is simply priceless.



MEGAMANIA

REALLY FAST FOOD

Telesys is just another videogame producer which likes to blend riveting action with rollicking graphics. There is nothing blindingly revolutionary about the play-mechanic of **Fast Food** — it's a combination of catch and avoidance strategies — but turning the moving objects into assorted munchies and the player's on-screen representative into a gulping mouth, gives this cartridge just the extra pizzazz it needs.

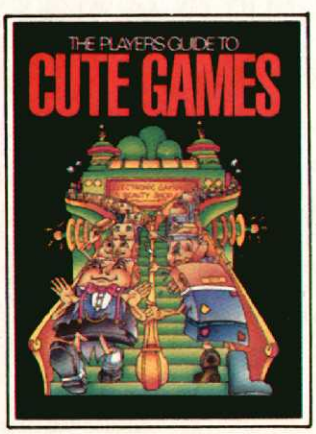
Most Coleco-produced

NOTHING'S CUTER THAN

PRETTYING UP THE DISK

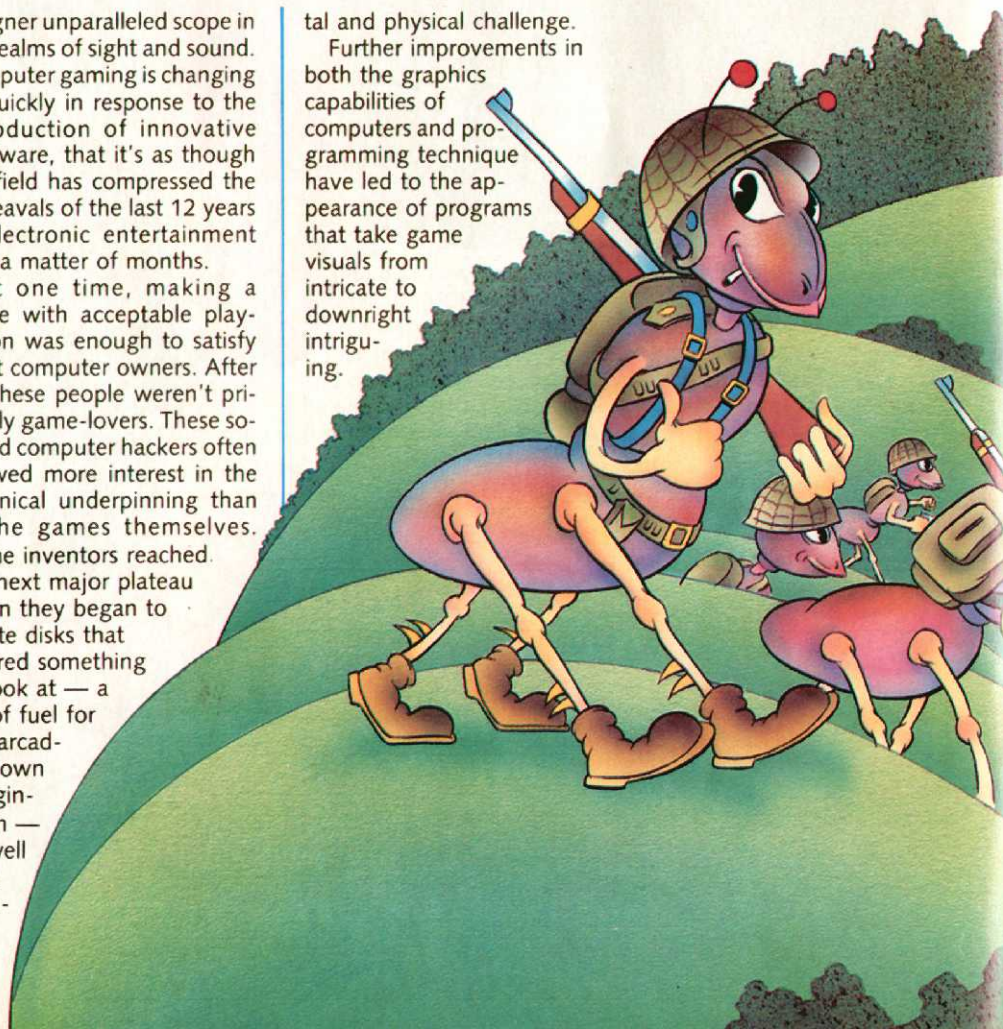
Computers and cute games are not exactly synonymous, though the gap between these once mutually exclusive concepts has narrowed greatly in the last two years. Home computing used to mean no sound, no color and no high resolution images. Let's face it, who besides Mary Pickford could look cute under such trying conditions?

Modern microcomputers are a different matter. The Atari 400, VIC-20 and other under-$500 brands, offer the designer unparalleled scope in the realms of sight and sound. Computer gaming is changing so quickly in response to the introduction of innovative hardware, that it's as though the field has compressed the upheavals of the last 12 years in electronic entertainment into a matter of months.



At one time, making a game with acceptable play-action was enough to satisfy most computer owners. After all, these people weren't primarily game-lovers. These so-called computer hackers often showed more interest in the technical underpinning than in the games themselves. Game inventors reached the next major plateau when they began to create disks that offered something to look at — a bit of fuel for the arcader's own imagination — as well as a mental and physical challenge.

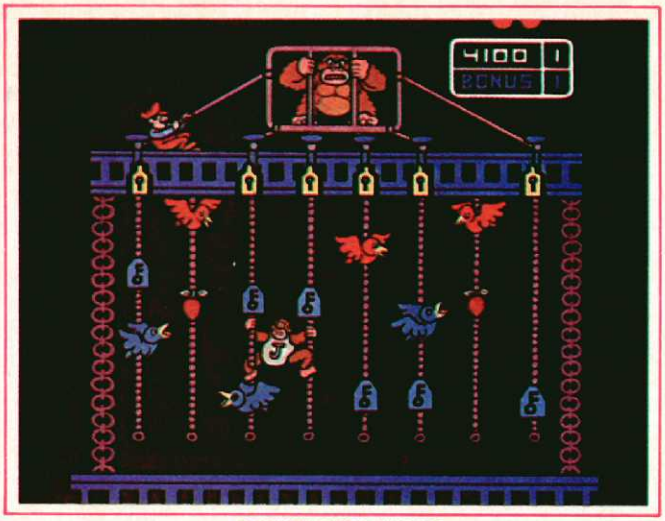
Further improvements in both the graphics capabilities of computers and programming technique have led to the appearance of programs that take game visuals from intricate to downright intriguing.



games have drawn on the coin-op field for inspiration, but the company's first all-original production, **Smurf**, could well be the cutest cartridge ever created for home play. This one cloaks a solid adventure game in which the object is to rescue a kidnapped princess from a dank castle, in the visual symbols made famous by the Smurf Saturday morning television show. This one is so uncompromisingly charming that you'll think you've left the real world behind and moved into cartoonland!

AND STILL MORE TO COME!

Parker Brothers has won what appears to be this year's champion coin-op cutie, outbidding its home game rivals.



DONKEY KONG JUNIOR

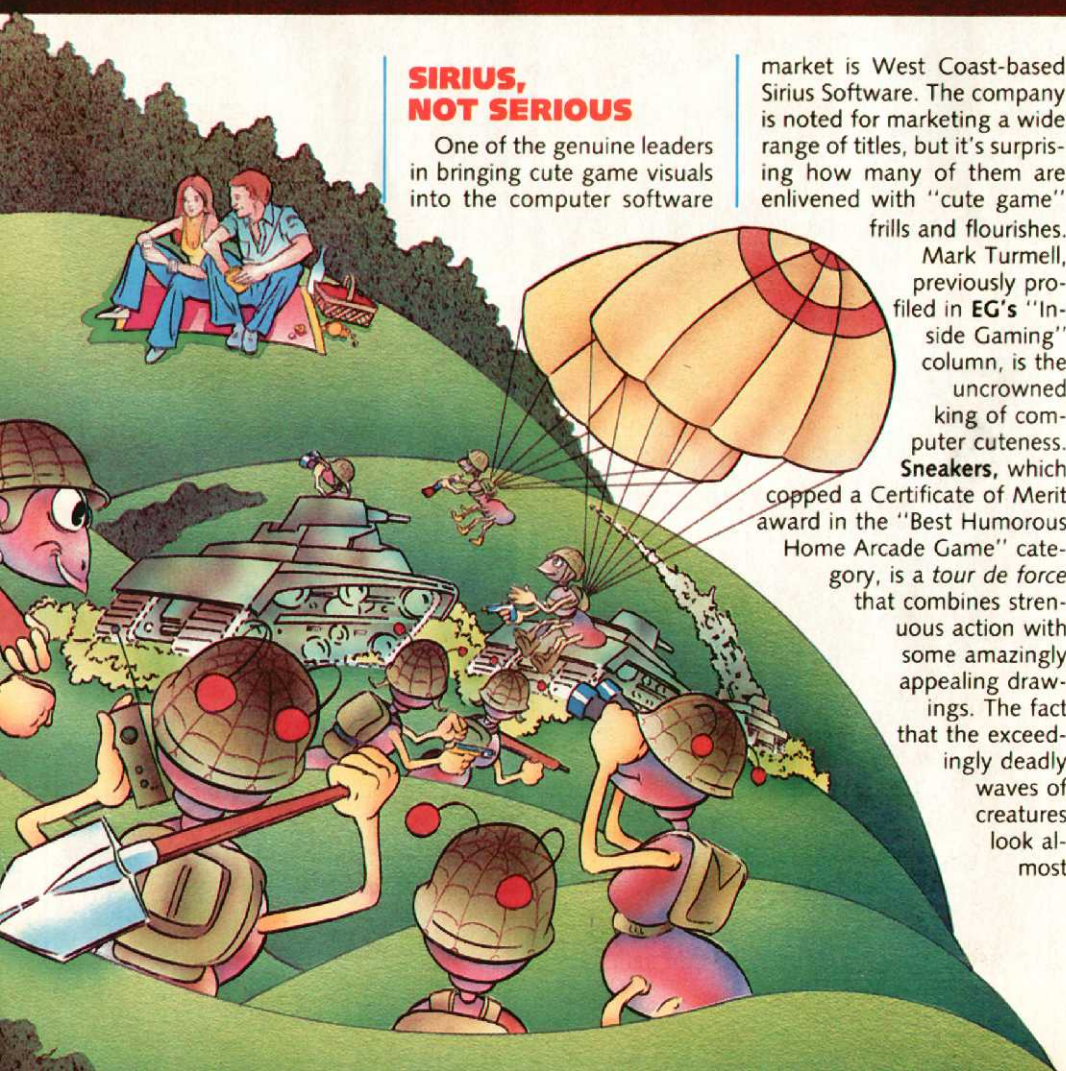
Q*Bert involves making the on-screen character jump from block to block on a huge pyramid. Each time Q*Bert jumps, the color of the block on which he comes to rest, changes. The goal here is to change all the cubes to the same color.

Atari didn't do a very good job of translating **Pac-Man** — the Godfather of Cute — into a VCS cartridge, but the company has had much, much better luck with its forthcoming **Ms. Pac-Man.** This one is packed with the features that made the Bally/Midway machine such a perfect introduction to the electronic gaming world for many who'd never previously had the experience.

Coleco, too, will continue to show its devotion to cute games. One of its major titles for the first-half of 1983 will be **Donkey Kong Jr.** This sequel is at least as charming as the original, in a slightly topsy turvy way. In this instance, Donkey Kong is the prisoner of Mario, and it's up to the son of the super-sinian to scale the heights and set his dad free.

Care to place any bets?

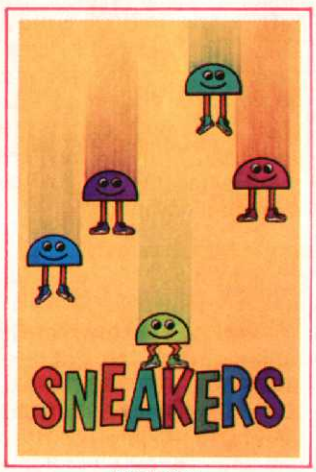
A MICROCOMPUTER



SIRIUS, NOT SERIOUS

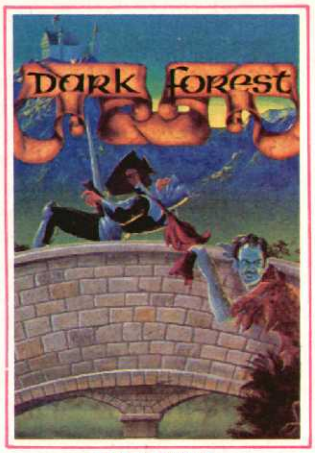
One of the genuine leaders in bringing cute game visuals into the computer software market is West Coast-based Sirius Software. The company is noted for marketing a wide range of titles, but it's surprising how many of them are enlivened with "cute game" frills and flourishes.

Mark Turmell, previously profiled in **EG's** "Inside Gaming" column, is the uncrowned king of computer cuteness. **Sneakers,** which copped a Certificate of Merit award in the "Best Humorous Home Arcade Game" category, is a *tour de force* that combines strenuous action with some amazingly appealing drawings. The fact that the exceedingly deadly waves of creatures look almost friendly as they wipe your cannon off the screen, only adds to this program's attractiveness.



SNEAKERS

Turmell's most recent foray into the world of cute games is every bit as amusing as *Sneakers.* **Free Fall's** protagonist drops from a hanging position at the top of the playfield and must be steered to one of the safe landing sites. The way the on-screen hero's arms and legs flail wildly on the way down heightens the drama of the situation. You *want* to



DARK FOREST

help this poor guy find something to grab to break his fall, and this definitely sharpens the bite of the game's primary play-action.

Sometimes, even the most serious strategy games from this company display that bracing dash of wit that marks the cute game. Take **Dark Forest,** a heavy strategy game in which the player (or players) attempts to conquer province after province, within a mythical fantasy kingdom. The enemy, found in the solitaire version, isn't some eldritch wizard or frightening hoard of super soldiers, but rather the impish Gruds. These cute and cuddly creatures multiply like rabbits, so you won't want to take their engaging smiles too seriously, either. They get mean when they've got the numerical advantage.

ATARI'S CUTE CONTESTS

Atari takes maximum advantage of the graphics ability of its 400/800/1200XL computer systems by offering several delightful coin-op cuties in versions for home play. The edition of **Pac-Man** for the Atari computers bears no relation whatsoever to the rather humdrum VCS cartridge of 1982. Here you can plainly see the qualities which enabled this game — or rather the Bally/Midway commercial version — to entice people who never put a quarter into a coin slot, to give the gallant gobbler a try.

Also excellent is the more recent **Centipede** cart. The world's cutest invasion game struts its finest plumage in the Atari 400/800/1200XL format, providing home arcaders with a garden full of deadly delights such as pouncing spiders and sinuous insects that undulate down the screen.

STOP THAT PREPPIE

When Adventure International begins putting out cute games, you know that something major is happening. The company is best known for its series of adventure programs, many of which show a pucking sense of humor with an emphasis on puns and word play. But this company was late getting into sound and graphics, so it was surprising to many players to see **Preppie!,** a distant relative of **Frogger** with a theme that's at least 10 times zanier!

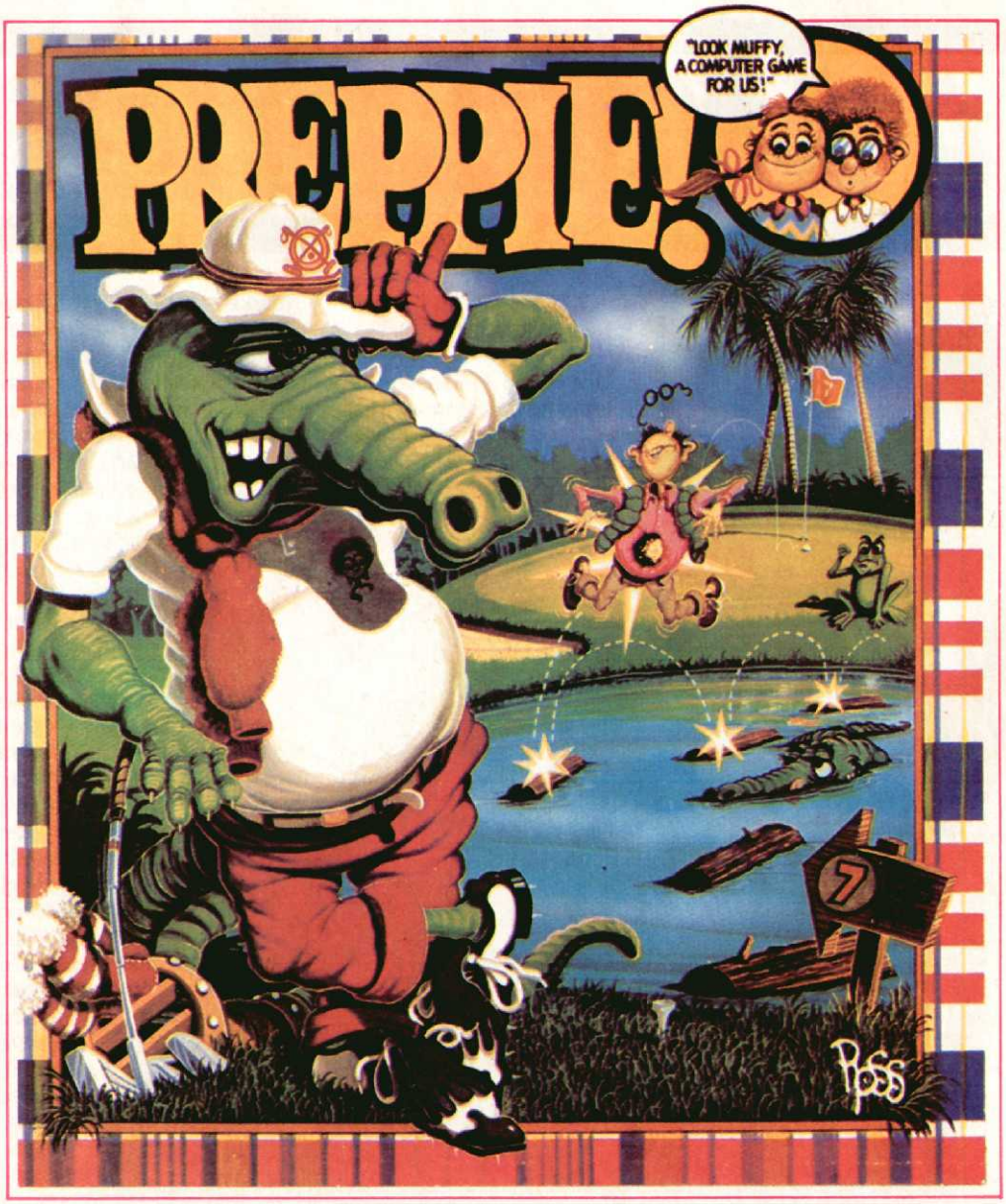
Your goal is to guide the Preppie through an obstacle course composed of typical preppie paraphernalia and accouterments. The play-routine isn't overly novel, but those oh-so-funny animated images put this disk in a class by itself.

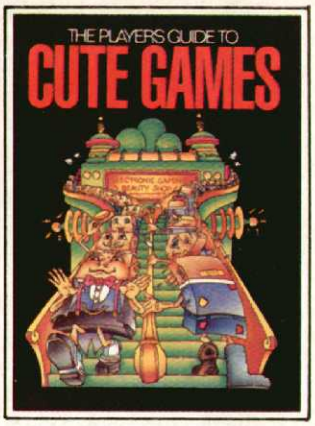
THE PICNIC PANIC

Synapse Software has a lighter side to its line, exemplified by **Picnic Paranoia.** In this one, the player wields a super fly swatter over a group of four picnic tables, in an effort to keep the army of ants from running off with lunch. The concept is sure to draw at least a smile from anyone who has ever dined *alfresco* in the wrong place, yet its unique play-mechanic easily could have stood up well without such adornment. With it, *Picnic Paranoia* becomes a jewel of a disk.

PICNIC PARANOIA

Synapse is quickly earning a reputation for fine Atari games, and this is one reason.





A QUARTER'S WORTH OF CUTE

BANNER DAYS FOR BOUNTY BOB

Miner 2049er, the Bill Hogue-designed game that will shortly be available for play on just about every videogame and computer system in the universe, shows how cute game graphics can be successfully incorporated into a design without detracting the tiniest bit from its appeal among the hard-core arcade aces. As Bounty Bob, a prospecter of the mid-21st century, you must explore the mine stations, avoiding the mutants who can be eliminated if you first snag one of the relatively scarce bonus objects. Speed is of the essence, since thousands of bonus points can be yours if you can navigate the mine station with dispatch.

Once you've fully covered the first mine station, you can proceed to delve into nine more different ones. Each offers a set of play features that requires special thought and planning on the part of the gamer. These range from an elevator that runs between the four floors of each station, to a cannon which can fire Bob to the top of the screen like a human rocket, so that he can finish his mission.

PAC-MAN, KING OF THE COIN-OP CUTIES

Although the popular roots of today's "cute" videogames are remarkable in that their genesis stems largely from home titles, as opposed to the arcade incubator, the King of the Cuties was *definitely* born in coin-opsville.

Pac-Man has been credited with many things, but perhaps his most significant contribution to the world of electronic gaming lies in his popularity with the ladies. For the first time, a major title presented a whimsical, cartoon-like protagonist opposed by cute little ghosts, each with their own nicknames and eccentricities, in *lieu* of the more traditional outer space blast-'em-up or race car simulation. *Pac-Man* got the women of America to give videogames a chance — and the love affair is only just beginning.

Already established as the Mickey Mouse of the '80's, "Paccy" has started up an entire family, with **Ms. Pac-Man,** one of last year's top money-makers and **Baby Pac-Man,** a highly innovative pinball-videogame crossover looking hot for '83. I'm not sure whether they have a *Pac-Pet,* but if they do, it'll probably have *its* own title by this time next year.

Pac-Man was largely notable for its combination of charming characters and super play value. Since its debut, a score of "cute" contests have reached the arcades, many bringing their own innovations with them—notably the **Donkey Kong** clan. Not all the follow-ups have been as much fun to play as to watch, but the cute titles are definitely the hot ticket in the 1983 coin-op sweepstakes.

Of course, this influx of Pac-games may well start the character's popularity cycle all over again. If these new coin-op variants catch on with the public — and there's every reason to believe they are doing so — it wouldn't be impossible to imagine a whole raft of home game editions based on these licensed properties.

QUARTER-CHOMPING CHARMERS

KANGAROO SCORES AN ARCADE KO

Cute animals have always been popular with the creators of cute games. Whether being licensed from existing toys and cartoon characters or created out of whole cloth animals — from frogs to penquins—they all seem made to order for videogames.

The newest creature-cutie to punch its way to the top of the coin-op hill is Atari's **Kangaroo.** The proud heritage of frogs, penguins and gorillas is carried on nobly in this combination jump and punch game. Here's the scenario: a mother boxing marsupial has her baby 'roo kidnapped by a tribe of nasty, chittering monkeys, who take the tyke to the top of the playfield and imprison it in a small cage. The momma kangaroo has no intention of letting this misdeed go unpunished and sets off on a hopping mad search for her baby.

Players control the mad momma over a series of playfields which test a variety of gaming skills. The initial scenario has our fair momma

KANGAROO

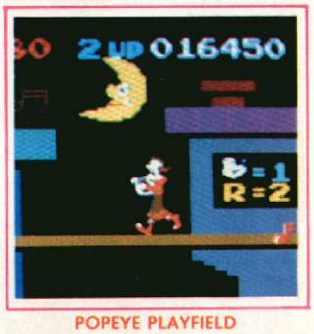
leaping up a stair-step series of platforms toward the top right of the playfield. The mean monkeys, alas, are scampering wildly up and down the tree that fills the right side of the screen. The monkeys' favorite pastime is eating apples and hurling the cores at the avenging kangaroo. The 'roo can either jump over or duck underneath the oncoming projectiles and, upon actually coming within reach of an annoying ape, can deliver a bonus knock-out punch that would make Rocky Balboa proud!

Over a trio of racks, the mamma must jump, leap, duck and punch her way to her offspring in what has proven to be a real arcade crowd-pleaser.

MOON BUGGIES AND ODDBALL CUTIES

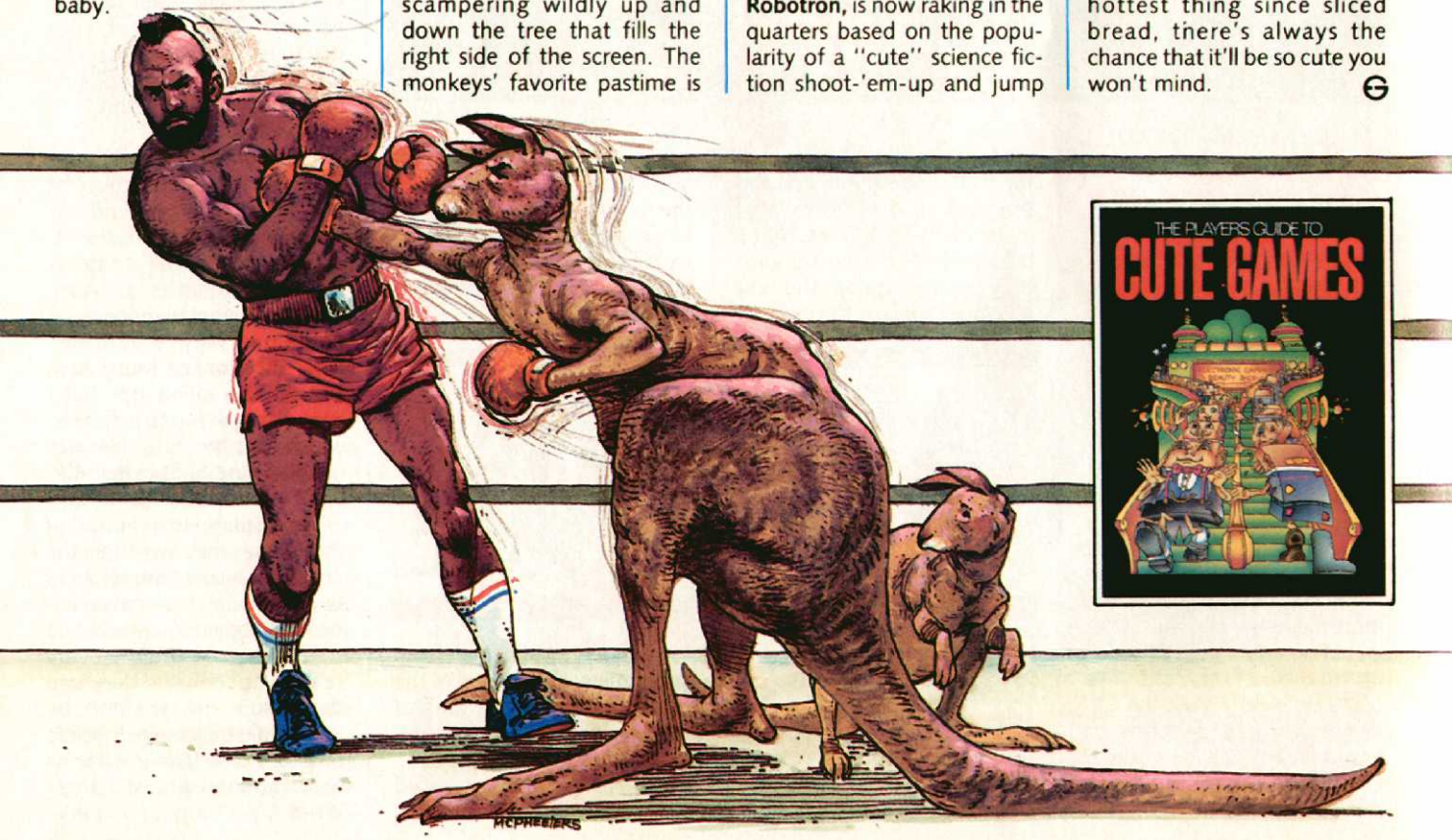
As with any popular genre of arcade game, the "cute" games have now thoroughly been absorbed into the spare-parts bin of videogame creation. Play elements and even whole game categories go flying out the window when a hot new title like **Moon Patrol,** from Williams, comes along. The company that brought you **Defender, Stargate** and **Robotron,** is now raking in the quarters based on the popularity of a "cute" science fiction shoot-'em-up and jump game. Say what? That's right, fellow gamers, videogames are equal opportunity employers, and as the genres continue to mix and match and intermingle, we'll be seeing even more off-the-wall results.

Imagine, for example, Midway's **Tron** played as a "cute" title, complete with elements of **Jungle Hunt** and several others. Can do? Then you've got **Mr. F. Lea,** a four-games-in-one entry from Pacific Novelty, in which gamers guide a tiny flea on a quartet of wild adventures.



POPEYE PLAYFIELD

Whether they jump, shoot, run through mazes or eat spinach (as in Nintendo's **Popeye**), cute games are here to stay, as much a staple of the videogame universe as the science fiction or maze chase contests. And even when the games themselves aren't the hottest thing since sliced bread, there's always the chance that it'll be so cute you won't mind.



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Confessions of an ARCADE TECHNICIAN

By LES PAUL ROBLEY

On the Run with the Men Who Keep the Games Running

Concentrated media attention on electronic gaming in all its facets has made philosophers out of manufacturing executives, stars out of designers and rich men out of more than a few retailers. All the publicity has, however, left one group of indispensable folks relatively anonymous — the technical virtuosos who keep **Tempest** tempestuous and ensure that **Pac-Man** keeps gobbling.

Frankly, this state of affairs is unlikely to change. These repairmen are definitely low-profile people who are more interested in doing their jobs efficiently and properly, than in vying for newspaper headlines.

Who are these phantoms of the arcade? What do you do and how do they do it? To get the answers to these and other questions, I rode shotgun with a genuine machine-master who asked me to cloak his identity under the *nom de fix* "Techs" (pronounced "Tex").

My first stop with Techs was not the local arcade, but to his girl friend's, to bring her a gallon of gas for her car. This, he told me, is one of the things he liked most about the job; not bringing his girl friend gas, but the looseness and carefree nature of his work. If he wants, he can even spend an extra hour for lunch and tell his superiors the traffic was heavy on the freeway, or spend a little longer at a particularly interesting arcade by doctoring-up the game repair reports.

Don't let these daytime shenanigans give you the wrong impression of Techs. He really is a nice, and reasonably conscientious fellow. His only real weakness is teasing the little children who follow him around all day asking for credits. One of his stories relays the time he was working on **Moon Cresta,** and had built up an amazing 90 credits in the machine's memory. There were about three or four kids breathlessly waiting for him to finish, each hoping to get their paws on those free plays. This is probably what arcade-heaven is like to some youngsters; the ultimate joy of having hours to play on their favorite coin-op. So one of the kids comes out with the famous line: "What are you gonna do with all those credits? Can I have some?" "Yes. You can have whatever's left after I close the machine," Techs responded.

Techs recalled that you could almost see the video florescence light up in their eyes. Their tongues protruded like happy frogs after flies, in anticipation of all those credits. Of course, when Techs completed the work, he would have to turn off the unit in order to close the cabinet. This, unfortunately, resets the RAM, and all those

A standard top-firing joystick as seen on the control console from Centuri's Tunnel Hunt

tasty credits evaporated completely. He told me all this while gripping his car's steering wheel with one hand, while changing gears and emphasizing each word with the other. Techs is probably the last of the truly passive drivers in Los Angeles.

The second stop—and the first real business call—was the nearest local arcade. Techs works for a major chain and makes a hefty salary, plus any overtime. He has been known to work as late as 11:00 p.m. on the night before a busy weekend.

The first thing he did when he walked into this arcade was to glance all about the premises. He called this getting a place "wired." In other words, he was getting a feel for the day's prevailing ailments. Any darkened video screen is a sure sign of trouble.

Next he checked the ERR (Equipment Repair Report). The thing that irks him the most, besides people taking their low scores out on a helpless machine, is when arcade staffers fail to write down or visually inspect a machine that he can see is definitely not functioning. This really burns his IC's. Theoretically, he doesn't have to fix the coin-op if it's not listed as critical on the ERR. Usually, he doesn't; in this case (perhaps because I was there) he did.

Patient number one was **Berzerk.** Its problem was clear: the on-screen man refused to move when the joystick was pushed. Normally the trouble's in the leaf springs, such as a contact not connecting. He started to check this and, as I stood there feeling useless, I noticed a black wire sticking up from one of the circuit boards. It turned out this was the problem; a ground wire that had broken loose due to wear. If all the glitches were this simple, I thought to myself, I'm in the wrong business.

Patient number two was a pinball called **Flight 2000**. It seemed that the right flipper was adding 20 points every time it was pressed, and players could get free games by just playing the flipper. (If only more videogames could have problems like this!) Lifting the enormous hunk of plate glass off the playfield was a sight to behold, as a crowd of onlookers gathered about us, eager to see if it would break (yes, he has broken them before). Techs knew the difficulty instantly, such was his craft and artfulness. A spinner was stuck, shorting out when the flipper button was pressed, the 20-points representing the spinner's scoring value!

Patients three and four were a couple of next door neighbors — two skeeball alleys. The tickets or coupons that are supposed to eject when a certain value is reached, were jammed in the slot; a typical problem caused by kids kicking the dispenser to get extra tickets. As he removed a wad of some thousand coupons, a voice nearby asked the common question heard for the first time today: "What are ya gonna do wit' alla' dem tickets?" Techs said the coupons were like money to them. The other skeeball unit didn't have the nine required wooden balls, since players working in cahoots sometimes shift them from lane to lane to see if they can get a higher score on an indi-

vidual alley. Techs prescribed another easy remedy: take two balls, plenty of rest, and call me in the morning.

We didn't fix the table-top **Missile Command,** which was overheating while stuck in display mode. Techs said he'd let it cool off 'til tomorrow. We didn't look at the table-top **Defender,** because the arcade attendant had lost the key. **Battlezone,** another easy fix-it, wouldn't accept the arcade center's special token, so *presto!,* Techs widened the mechanical magnet in the slot. **Red Baron** refused to travel left or right when a player moved the joystick. A quick look inside revealed that the stick had broken loose from the potentiometer sockets. An upright *Defender* wouldn't continue past the snowy test pattern when turned on. The initial diagnosis proved to be correct: a blown fuse in the power supply. **Ms. Pac-Man's** ailment turned out to be nothing more than a hypochondriac false alarm. The volume had been set so low that players couldn't hear the ever popular theme and assumed it was broken. How Laurel and Hardy can you get? Apparently this sort of thing happens quite often. Unaccustomed players complain: "The game won't start." Techs thus answers: "Try pushing the start button."

Then it was back to the EFR where he logged his name and wrote down the reason why each machine didn't function, I told him that, with common sense and a little basic E., I could have fixed each coin-op myself. Techs replied that 95% of the problems are merely mechanical, and he has yet to fully tap his extensive knowledge of electronics and algebraic equations. Most of these minor mishaps can be fixed by the arcade staff themselves. Depending on Techs' mood, he can either write the report to make it look like it was a difficult job to fix, or list an easy repair in the remarks column which will eventually lead back to the staff. If he's feeling really nasty, he might do both.

Just then a teenager entered the game parlor with a coke in hand and Techs ordered him to finish it outside. The power of authority goes with the job, he explained, and sometimes seems to make it all worthwhile. "I'm not being hard-nosed about all this," he commented as he took a sip from his own container of coke that he had hidden behind the counter. "There's just a certain procedure we have for doing things around here so the machines don't get messed up." Taking a swig from my own container of coke, I heartily agreed.

He admitted that sometimes the repairs could get rather involved. On one occasion, a circuit board wiggled loose on *Tempest,* and it took him and an assistant two hours to figure out the trouble. They replaced everything they could think of before one of them accidentally bumped the board. Any youngster hoping to get into this racket, he advised, should start in high school taking all the math, particularly algebra, and vocational electronics they can get. It takes more than just a knowledge of circuit schematics and numbers. There must be a self-motivation, a natural inquisitiveness and logical awareness to want to know the theory behind why things work. This, he feels, is the major hurdle to conquer in becoming a competent repair technician.

Spend a Day with the "Mr. Fixit" of the Arcade World!

And, of course, you must ultimately like the games. At certain times in his life, his state of feelings will change radically about the entire business. He has been known to say, "There is nothing new anymore; the current games are all basically the same and, as a result, are boring. It's not worth the time or the effort it takes to fix them." But sure enough, a month later he'll be playing everything in sight, again.

His main gripe, however, still lies with gamers who take their spite out on the machines. One time he grew so annoyed that he thought of fixing the joystick so it would shock the player if he got too fresh with it. Of course, the arcade center would get sued if too many machines were programmed to "fight back". The closest he's come to any retribution has been to manually raise the difficulty level of each game, setting the toggle switch to require more than one token, and programming little warnings into the greetings of games like **Robotron** and **Stargate** (coin-ops which enable one to make minor changes during the self-test mode). His best effort to date is: "Play too rough and may a thousand robot fleas infest your bed at night."

While driving me back to my car, he told me about one other stunt he'd pulled. Again, he had one hand on the wheel, while the other made circular waving motions in the air as he spoke. While working on **Monaco GP,** in a fury over some flak he had received that day from an arcade manager, he accidentally bumped the toggle switch over to require three tokens for the game. An older gentlemen had played it a few times, apparently liking the game a lot, and later noticed that the machines on either side had only required one token. He corralled Techs and asked for a refund. Realizing what had happened, Techs made an astonished face, saying, "Oh! That's the modified version! Didn't you get to the pedestrians?"

"Pedestrians?" the man asked, "What pedestrians?"

"Yeah, when you're further along in the game and are really doing well, pedestrians will cross the street, and you should try to run them down for extra time and bonus points," Techs replied. So the man went back and played it some more, but he never did find the pedestrians. "He could still be there for all I know." The game-fixer grinned wickedly. G

A VIEW FROM THE BACK OF THE MACHINE!

Likes and Dislikes of an Arcade Repairman

Even if Techs, the repairman profiled in the accompanying story wanted to, it would be almost impossible to do a good job while retaining an aura of professional detachment. Beneath the banter and M*A*S*H-like pranks, there's a man who has some pretty strong feelings about the world through which he moves during his work week.

Here are a few of the opinions he offered during our journey together:

Most valuable tool:
Radio Shack combination blade and Phillips head screwdriver.

Favorite Videogame:
An early coin-op called *Fire One.*

Favorite Pinball:
Quicksilver.

Favorite dessert:
Licorice ice cream.

People he likes the most:
Those with a genuine interest in the games and in what makes them tick.

People he dislikes the most:
Those who mistreat the games, handling the controls harshly, i.e. bending joysticks, kicking them, etc.

Game needing the most repair:
Monopoly boards.

Videogames most common problem:
Foreign tokens getting stuck in coin slot, or leaf springs breaking on joystick.

Most common problem with pinballs:
Flippers breaking.

Most asked question by adults:
"How did you get into this line of work?"

Most asked question by children:
Same as above, changing "did" to "do," plus "What are you going to do with all those credits or tokens?" and "Can I have some?"

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THE BEST GA
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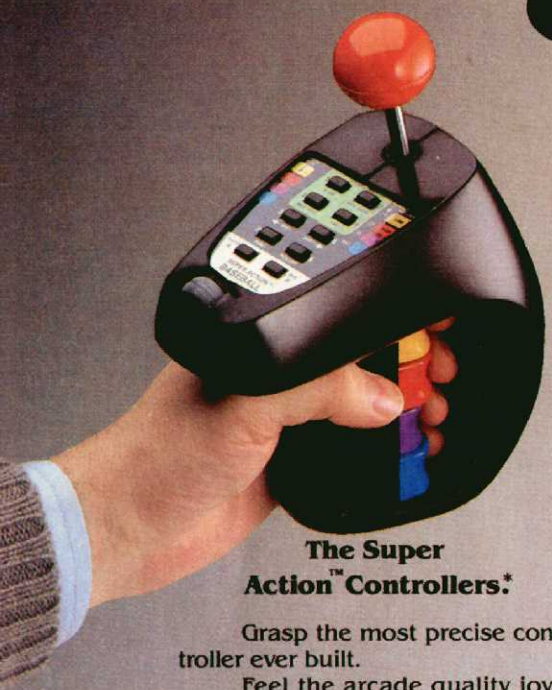

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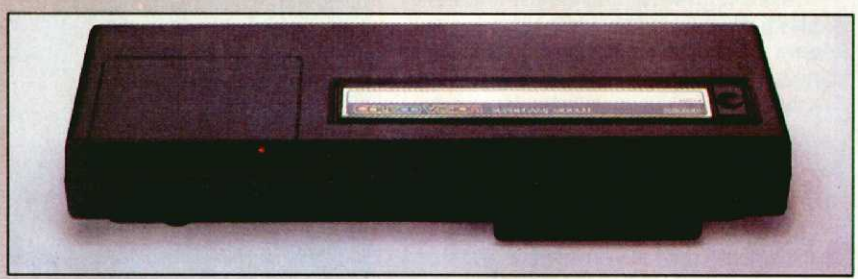

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COMPUTER

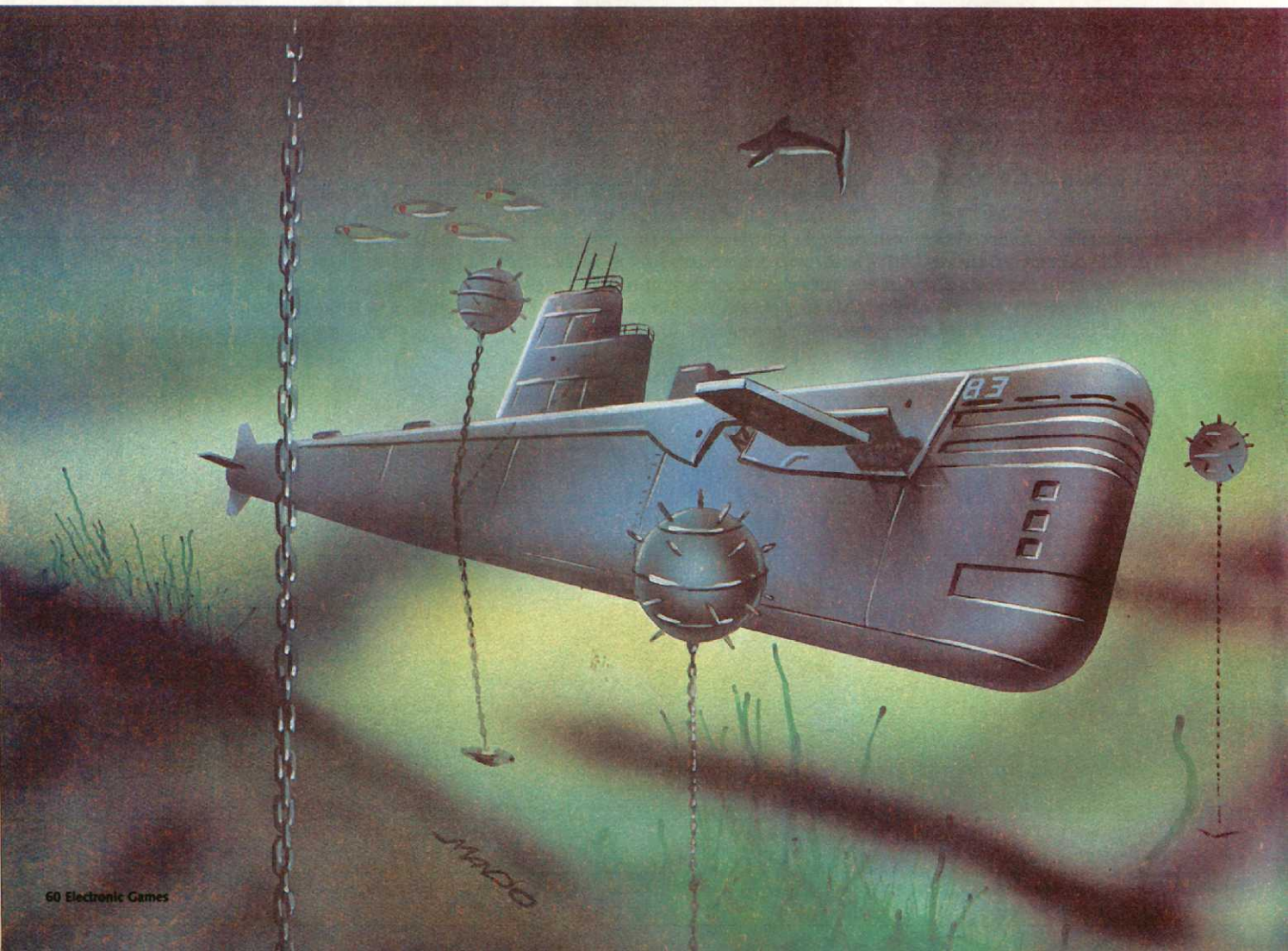
SEA DRAGON

Adventure International/Apple II 48K disk

It takes a lot of guts for a software publisher which has made its reputation with one particular type of game, to strike out boldly in an entirely new direction. That's exactly what Adventure International, long known for the Scott Adams text *Adventure* series, is doing these days with programs like this mono-directional scrolling shoot-out. Following in the wake of several strong entries, including last year's Certificate of Merit winner **Preppie**, comes this sleek undersea combat game.

Though **Sea Dragon** is an action-arcade program, playable with either keyboard or joystick, it shows its "family" roots by having a clearly defined purpose behind all the blasting. The mission is to guide your attack submarine through a watery gauntlet of exploding mines, hostile fish and tricky laser gates to liberate a mammoth sea dragon imprisoned deep beneath the sea. Designer Jon Anderson hasn't pulled any punches in setting up this test of skill, either. Only a strong player will successfully negotiate the 40 screens of peril before either reaching the 100% damage level, or exhausting the initial 6,000-unit supply of air. It's much more common to hear one of the disk's frequent verbal warnings of impending doom, which realistically mimic the sound of a crewman talking to you through your ship's communication system.

This is not to say that your submarine isn't pretty awesone in its own right. You can fire torpedoes by hitting the upper action button, or activate the Sonic Deflector by hitting the lower one. The Sonic Deflector wipes out any danger, even the laser barriers, which is visible on the screen at the time it is energized, but its use costs a whopping 500 units of air. Don't count on using this super-weapon too often



GAMING

Explore The Depths Of the Ocean With Sea Dragon!

though gamers, or it's all over.

Anderson, who worked from concepts originally outlined by Wayne Westmorland and Terry Gilman (credited with the TRS-80 version of this game), wisely included a practice level. Everything takes place at normal speed, but the submarine gets an extra 3,999 units of air. This makes it possible to use the Sonic Deflector more frequently to avoid tight situations. The "easy mode" supposedly gives the sub commander a chance to learn how to maneuver the ship — a slight amount of backing up is permissible, as in some other mono-directional scrollers — but many arcaders will find themselves using it for serious play until they have solved the problem of how to get through the laser gates without resorting to the Deflector. Doing so is quite possible, but getting through a single gate and then crashing into the next gains nothing, since the submarine will be set back to some earlier point on the course after such a collision, using up lots of air in the process.

In this connection, it's too bad that the vanity board which permanently records the 10 best scores (and retains them between play sessions) doesn't distinguish among practice, regular and super-touch advanced modes. In other words, a score compiled by a commander with 9,999 units of air can push a point total achieved with only 6,000 units of oxygen right off the honor roll.

Piloting skill is almost as important as shooting accuracy in *Sea Dragon*. To conserve precious air, it is often necessary to maneuver around dangers than to attempt to bludgeon them into pulp. The laser gates, epitomize this aspect of the program, since ordinary missiles have absolutely no effect on these barriers. It takes precision steering to get past the moving curtains of lethal light.

Is *Sea Dragon* too tough? That may be a bad question to ask a reviewer

who has yet to free the dragon by blasting the rows of bricks which lie at the end of the journey. There's no doubt that *Sea Dragon* is one of the most exacting challenges ever offered to the elite of home arcading. Yet, it is also true that its good sounds and graphics, variety of creatures and smooth play-mechanics are likely to make *Sea Dragon* popular with those who play at something less than championship level.

(Arnie Katz)

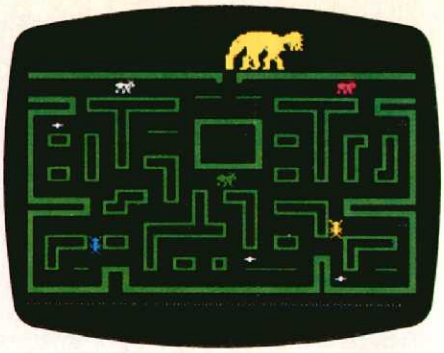
K-RAZY ANTIKS

CBS Computer/Atari computer systems
16K cartridge

If awards are ever given to the most difficult electronic game, **K-razy Antiks** will win the "maze-chase" category, hands down. This cartridge program presents a graphic representation of one of nature's true mazes, the ant hill, with all the problems of flooding, predators and internecine warfare.

In fact, if this program has a weakness, it is that many gamers will become discouraged by a string of instant defeats. It isn't fun to lose this often, and an easier difficulty setting would have been a blessing, but don't let the challenging nature of *K-razy Antiks* get you down. Practiced gamers will be rewarded by a maze-chase game that is a mile-a-minute, offbeat player's classic.

The player, represented by the white ant, has but one life to live; no freebie deaths here, ace. The white ant lays eggs by hitting the action button, with the ant-eggs remaining in reserve displayed at the lower left portion of the playfield. It's best to spread the offspring around since dropping them in clusters only makes them easier prey for the voracious enemy insects.



K-RAZY ANTICS PLAYFIELD

As play begins, a pair of enemy eggs are blinking in the ant hill. If the white ant can reach one before it begins its hatching sequence, it can be used as a bomb to lure a foe to his doom. Take too long, and there will be *more* insects to worry about.

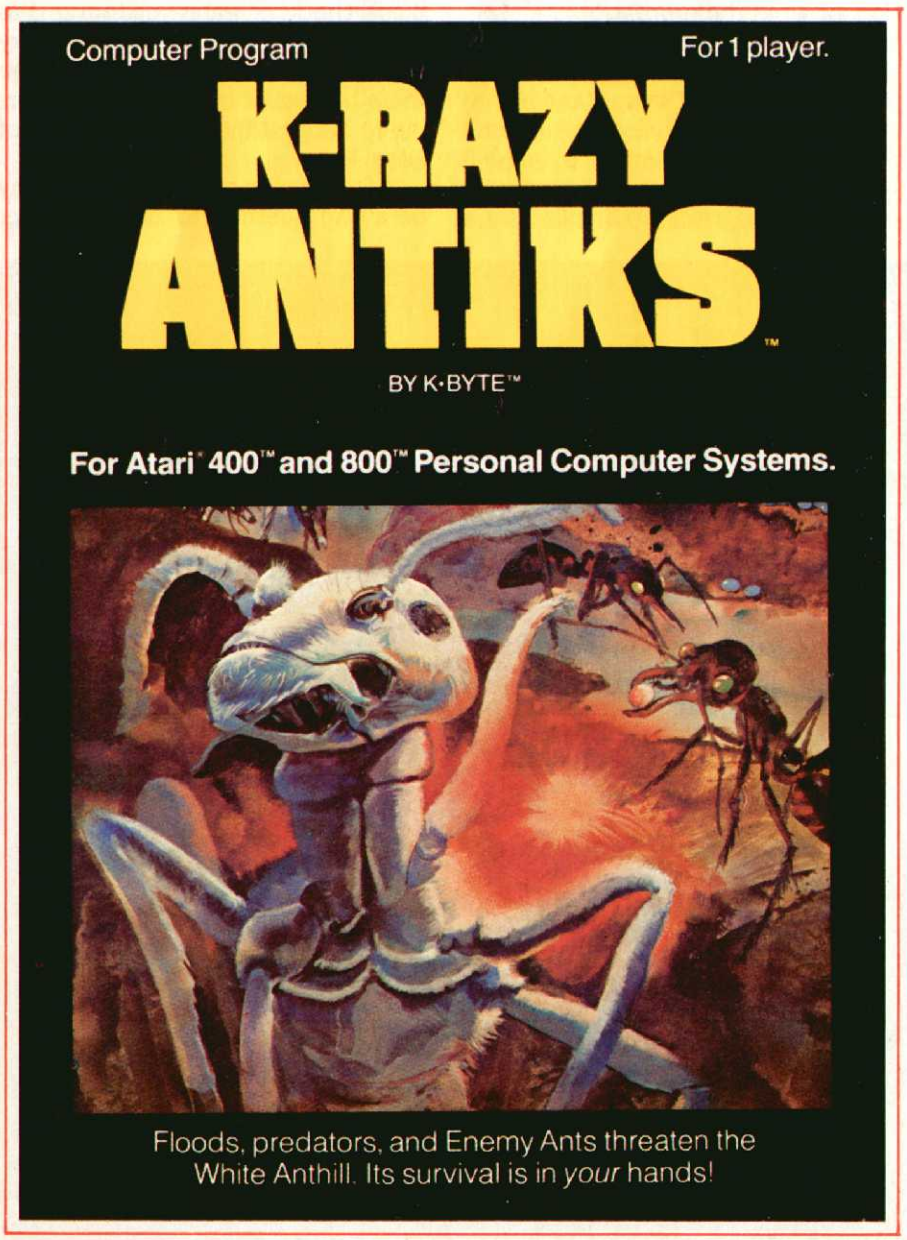
The object of the game is ironically — and agonizingly — simple. Lure all the enemy ants into a trap that will wisk them to the prison corral at the center of the labyrinth. There are three ways to do this. The first is to use the egg as a bug-bomb, as described earlier. The second is to lure the enemy into the probing tongue of the ant-eater, who periodically saunters on-screen and starts foraging for ant-ipasto. Getting your own ant wiped out negates the value of any enemy "deaths", which occur during the period when there's no player-surrogate on the screen.

So long as one of your white ant-eggs remains on-screen, play continues. An egg that is ready to hatch signals its metamorphosis by elongating and glowing with a pulsing light.

None of this sounds too intimidating. But imagine a 45 rpm record played at 78 rpm and you'll have a pretty good idea of the thought-to-action speed ratio employed in this game.

Graphics are spare, but true-to-nature, depicting the regimented life of an ant hill — albeit at breakneck speed — in fine detail. This brings us to the *third* way a white ant pulls the plug on a foe. Simply lure him to the bottom of the hill just before a great rain floods all but the uppermost levels of the colony. The deluge of the ant hill is accomplished with great flair and suitable accompaniment.

If this description hasn't daunted you, then you obviously possess the instincts of the true gamer and will enter the ant hill. You will beard the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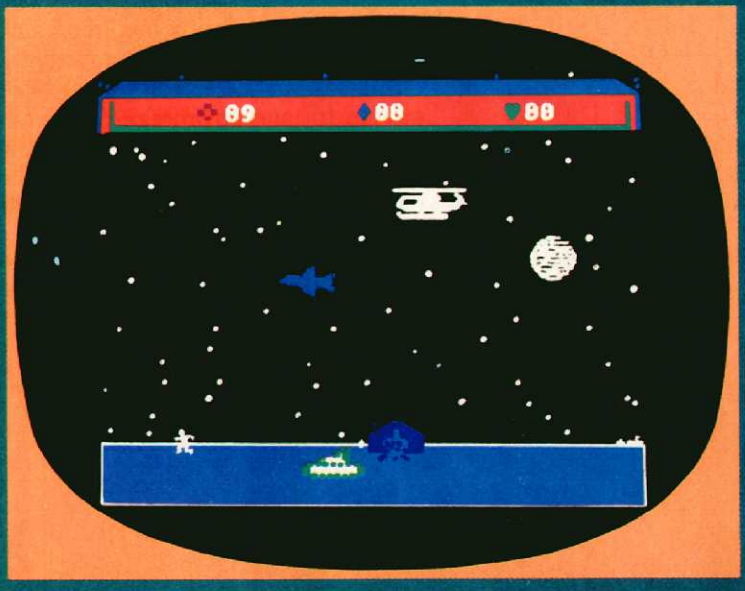

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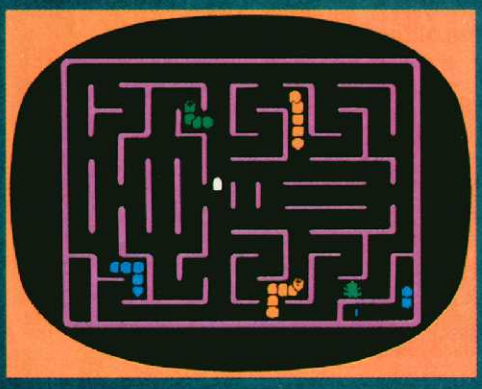

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lion — okay, ant — in its den! You will wield your joystick like a mighty weapon of forged steel!

And you will be smeared within the first 10 seconds, at least in your first few tries.

Check this one out.

(Bill Kunkel)

FROGGER

Sierra On-Line/Apple II/48K Disk

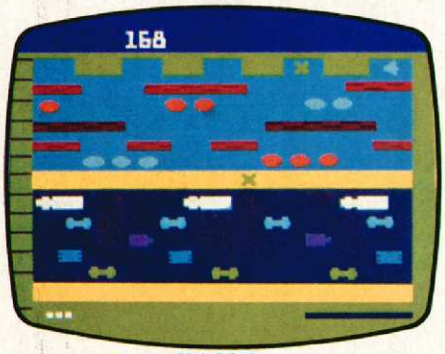
With great fanfare, Sierra On-Line jumped into the arena of arcade machine licenses by buying the rights to Sega's **Frogger.** Since the product is finally in the stores, the most overwhelming reaction must be a disappointment.

The graphics on the game are passable, but not nearly what one has come to expect from On-Line. Still, the single most troublesome aspect of this program is the inability to get the joystick to perform well.

Frogger is also playable with the keyboard, using the "A" and "Z" keys for moving the frog up and down and the arrow keys for left and right movement. Those choices can be changed at the user's discretion. The game plays quite well in the keyboard mode where response is quick and effective.

For this review, joysticks by TG and Kraft were used and neither equalled the responsiveness of the keyboard. The TG stick easily proved to be the best choice this time around.

Instructions for the game are sketchy at best. There is no mention of some of the hazards one encounters as



FROGGER

early on as the third screen, like the snakes. It seems that On-Line expected the buyer of this disk to be quite familiar with the arcade version.

For those who don't know *Frogger*, this writer won't make the same mistake as Sierra On-Line, by not giving a description of the play of the game.

The object is to move the amphibian across five lanes of traffic and onto one side of the river bank. From there, the frog must catch a ride onto passing logs, turtles or alligators and then land in one of the five safe "home" areas on the other bank. Getting hit by a truck, gobbled by a snake or falling into the river kills the frog. When five are gone, the game is over.

Scoring is as follows: forward jump, 10 points; safe arrival home, 50 points; beating the clock, five points per beat saved; escorting a lady frog home, 200 points; gobbling an insect, 200 points and getting all five frogs home, 1,000 points. When all five frogs are home, a new screen is presented. There are even some nice musical touches added in to improve the overall quality of the game.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

GORF

Roklan/Atari 400-800-1200/48K disk

Every new software publisher entering the electronic gaming field faces the same problem: how to carve out an economically viable niche in the marketplace. Roklan has quickly gained an exalted status through the release of quality editions of coin-op classics like **Deluxe Space Invaders, Wizard of War** and now, **Gorf.**

Midway's major follow-up to **Galaxian,** *Gorf* is the father of the multi-scenario game. It introduced the concept of facing several different situations in succession. It tests quite a range of gaming skills and furnishes the real arcade aces with a pleasing amount of variety.

Gorf is as letter-perfect as Roklan's previous translations. The opening mission's an invasion game much like **Space Invaders,** with one significant addition. A hemispherical forcefield which destroys both incoming and outgoing fire, appears intermittently. Other than a need for timing your attacks to take advantage of the absence of a forcefield, approach this as you would *SI* itself. Knock off the flank columns and then roll up the bottom rows of advancing creatures.

The second mission pits the player against attacking squadrons, which

MIDWAY
GORF
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LASER ATTACK

GORF

Have A Great Playday!

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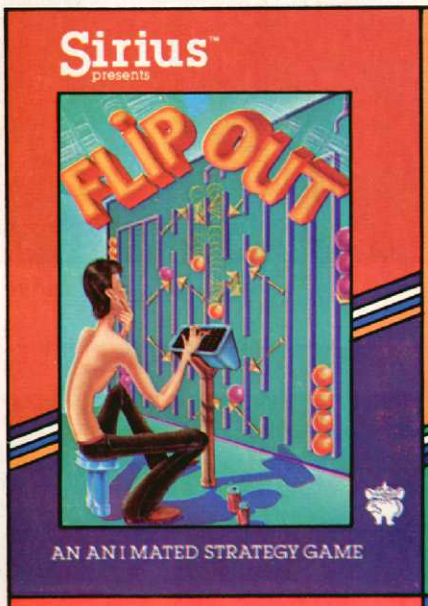
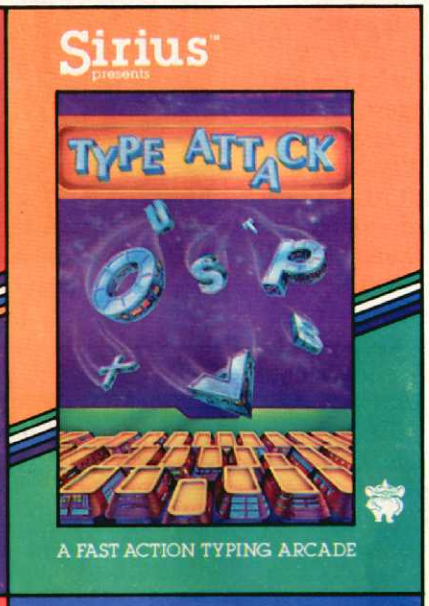
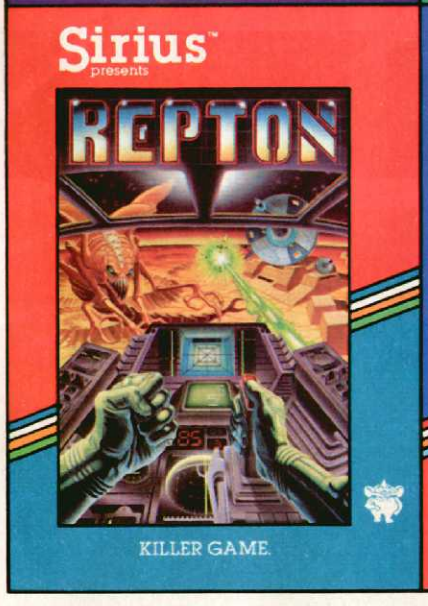
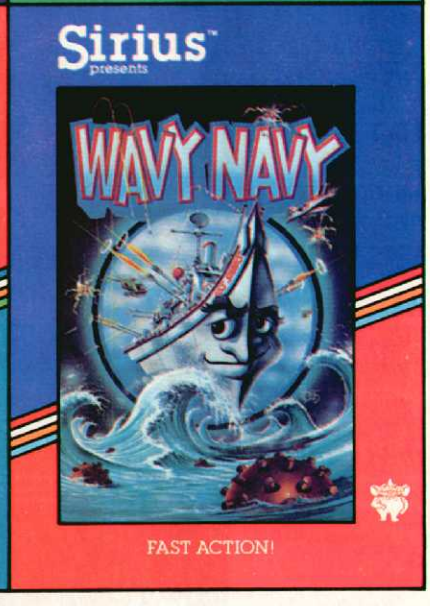




Turn your keyboard into a typing arcade! You can blast attacking letters and words right out of the sky. Type Attack was designed by a professional educator and the fast action game experts at Sirius. It features 39 preprogrammed lessons and 60 user defined lessons. Great sound, graphics and a real-time words per minute bar make improving your typing skills fun!

It is up to you to stop the invasion of the evil Quarriors and save Repton. You are armed with devastating Nuke Bombs, a Radar Screen, a Laser Gun and an Energy Shield. You'll need them all! You'll be attacked by Nova Cruisers and Single Saucers. You must avoid Spye Satellites and deadly Dyne-Beam Shooters and you must stop the Draynes from depleting the Reptonian power supply. Repton is a battle so thrilling you'll be relieved to find out you're still on earth when it's over!





Talk about adventure on the high seas! You're blasting away at a squadron of enemy bombers and Kamikaze fighters from the deck of your P.T. boat. Suddenly you notice the sea is loaded with mines and an Exocet missile is screaming toward you on the horizon. Instinctively you jerk the joystick to the starboard, keeping your thumb on the fire button. Phew! That was close! Sometimes it's hard to believe Wavy Navy's just a video game.

New Games For Your Apple II From Sirius™

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swoop down the playfield. Let the aliens come to you during this phase. Hold your fire until your foes come in for a strafing run and then blast away!

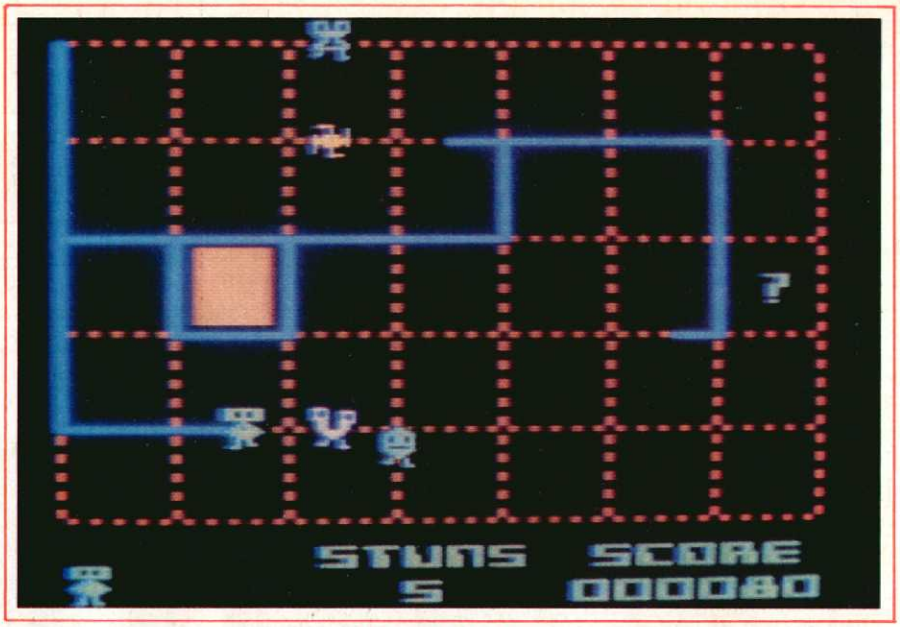
The focal point of the third scenario is a roughly circular space warp located about two-thirds of the way up the screen. Alien ships swirl out of this vortex, growing larger as they sweep around the focal point in an ever-widening arc. The trick is to get these foes early. The smaller targets are simpler to take out than the big ones because of the tight circling pattern.

The final mission of *Gorf* is the best of all. The enemy's biggest, nastiest fleet ship moves slowly cross-screen, dropping bombs as it drifts lower and lower. This big battlecraft has a single vulnerable spot located, thank the Force, on its underside. Keep blasting away at that spot, and don't become discouraged when seemingly direct hits ignite no explosions. Keep punching away at your larger enemy until you finally hit its weak spot, at which point the battlestar is blasted into what Carl Sagan would refer to as "billions and billions of pieces" in an explosion as thunderously powerful as anything you have ever seen in a videogame.

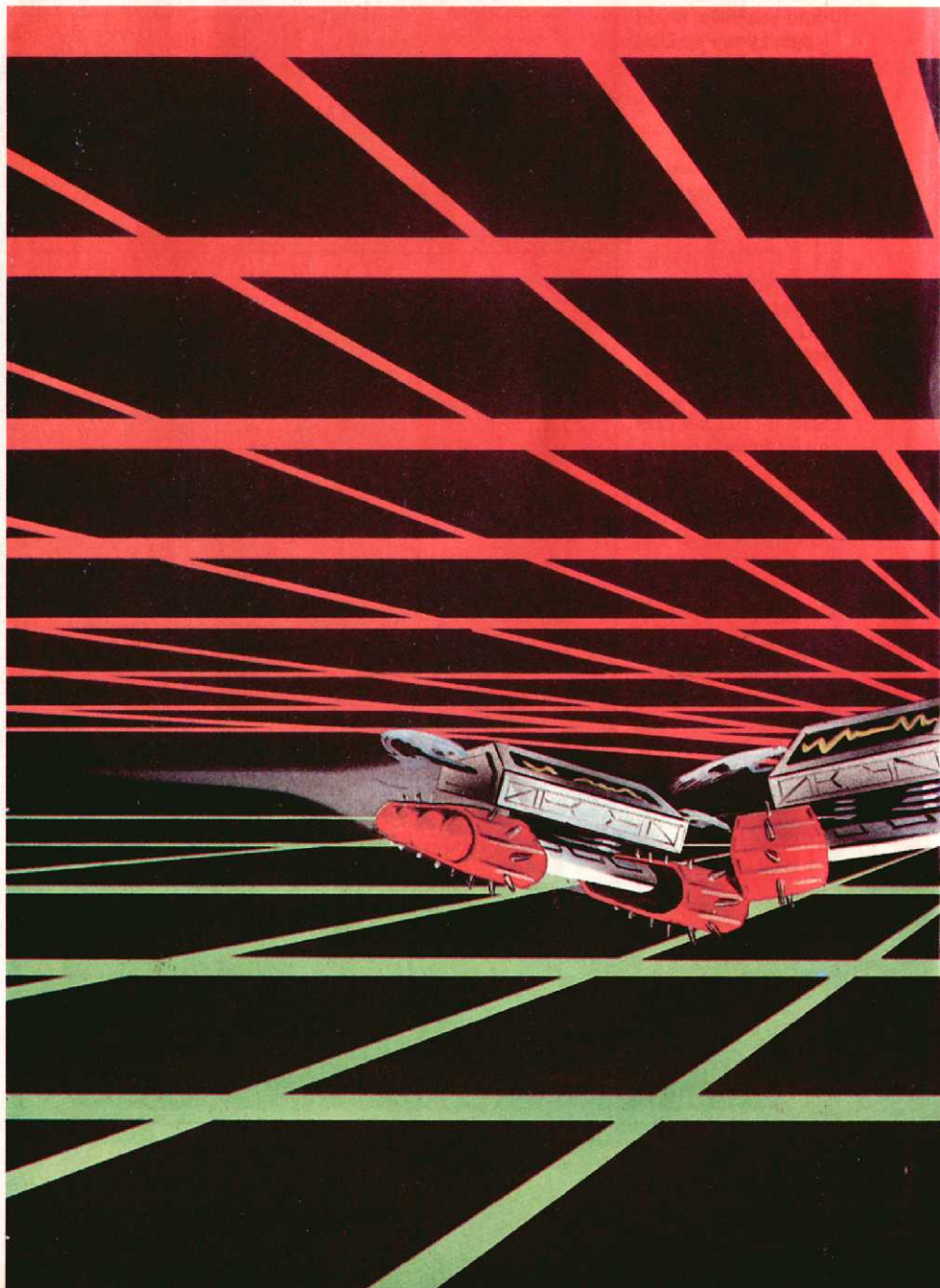
As with its other releases, the differences between Roklan's product and the original coin-ops from which it is derived are infinitesimal. If you liked *Gorf*, you'll like the Roklan home version.

As its line of classic coin-op translations grows, Roklan comes closer and closer to offering electronic gamers the home arcade of his or her dreams. These titles are so good that players may instinctively reach into their pockets after each play for another token. A four-star translation, *Gorf* is highly recommended.

(Will Richardson)



KID GRID PLAYFIELD



KID GRID

Tronix/Atari 400-800-1200
16K Cassette

The rash of "box-building" contests currently bursting on the videogaming scene is typified by two titles from the coin-op arcades: **Qix** *(Taito)* and **Amidar** *(Konami)*. *Qix* is a free-form contest in which the player has a dual-speed drawing-cursor and must draw boxes of various shapes and sizes over enough of the playfield to "box" in the randomly moving "qix" without touching it. *Amidar*, on the other hand, provides the player with a dotted, pre-drawn grid which must then

be covered by the player-surrogate (whether it's the gorilla or the paint roller). In *Amidar*, the player is given a ration of "stuns" for each turn. Hitting the action button turns the ape or roller into a blinking phantom which passes harmlessly through obstacles.

Kid Grid, the first in a series of Atari games for the 400/800/1200 computers, is essentially a variation of the box-building genre, with origins much closer to *Amidar* than *Qix*. The main difference is speed. The player's on-screen representative is a fleet-footed young box done up in his best running shoes. The kid, is, in turn, dogged by a crew of robots that wheel along the grid-line at high speed with deadly accuracy. The play mechanic alone makes this one of the most compulsive, utterly addictive contests in the world of computer gaming.

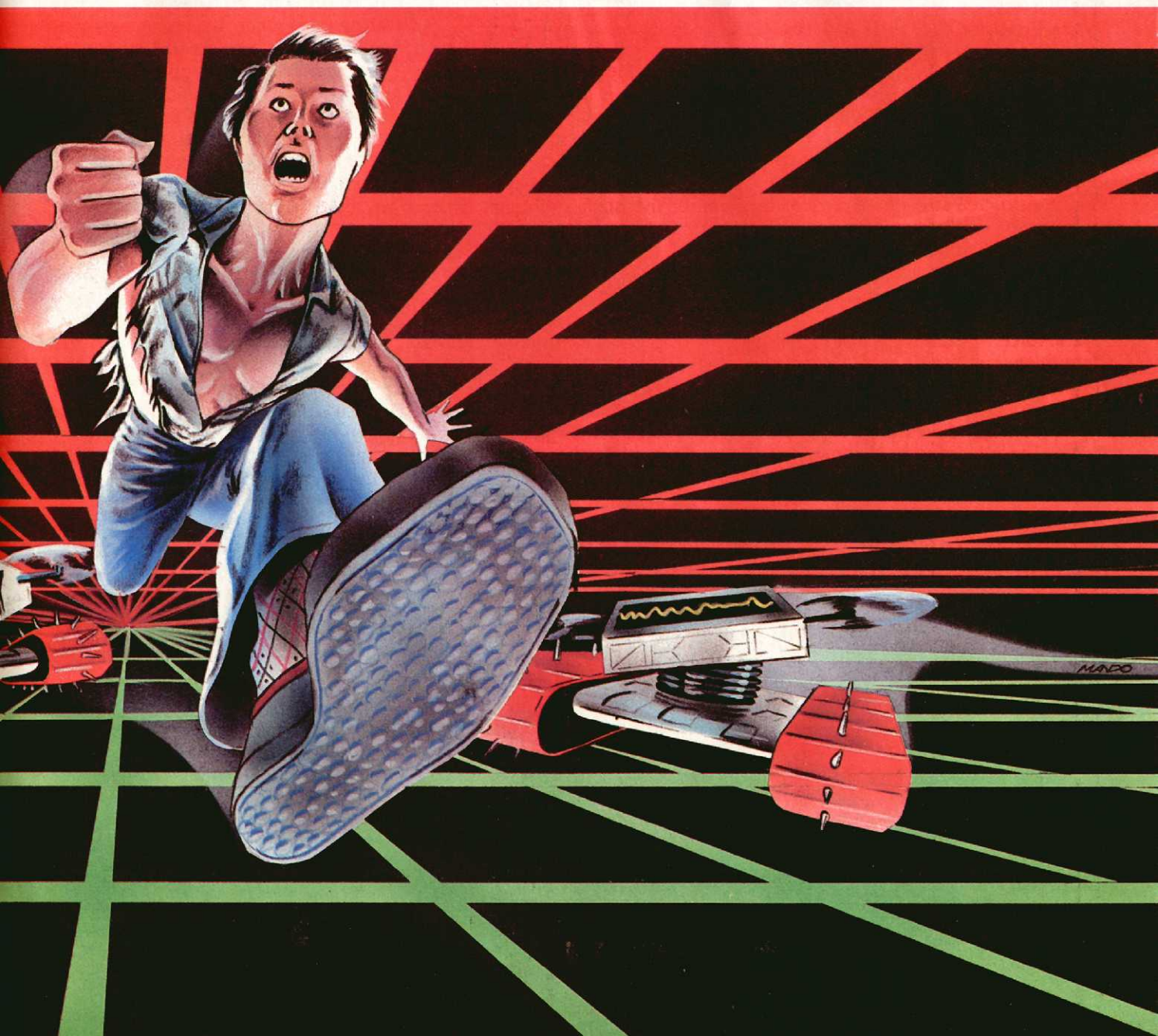
The graphics are clean-cut, and the joystick response is fluid as well as fast. Practice is required to attain real mastery over the insidious grid, but this contest is most susceptible to "pattern" play. Within a dozen games, better arcaders will discover certain routes that will, at the very least, start them off with a good head of steam.

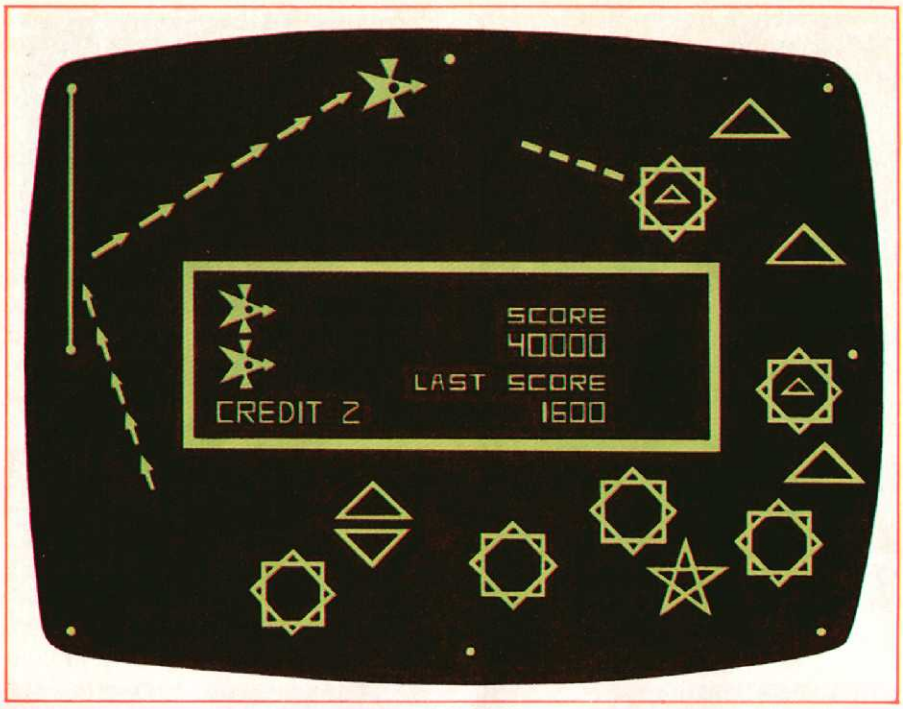
Kid Grid has play value coming out its ears and enough speed to give even its inspiration, *Amidar*, a run for the money. If you can play this one twice and then put down your joystick, either it isn't your game, or else you have a whole lot more willpower than any arcader on the **EG** staff.

Hypnotic, appealing, fast-moving arcade action of the highest calibre, *Kid Grid* also loads, even via tape drive, almost as speedily as it plays.

(Will Richardson)

KID GRID





OMEGA RACE

OMEGA RACE

Commodore/VIC-20/ROM cartridge

Commodore has added a few flourishes to Bally/Midway's 1981 arcade hit, **Omega Race**, to produce a real winner for the VIC-20. The carefully constructed scenario — it's a test of a warrior's skill devised by an alien race known as the Omegans — leads to maximum excitement as the player battles alone against a veritable space navy.

The force which is supposed to help determine your fitness as an Omegan warrior is composed of two types of ships. Droids are worth 1,000 points, while command vessels count for 1,500. The latter must be eliminated as quickly as possible, or they turn into wildly careening death ships. Such craft are the most serious dangers facing the player/pilot, and earns a hefty 2,500 points when you blast one out of the sky.

The enemy ships also lay two types of mines as they traverse the field. You get small amounts of points for mopping up these explosive devices, but their primary purpose is to restrict the gamer's movement.

Omega Race, like **Asteroids**, uses a thrust-centered control system. The player points the ship's nose in the desired direction and then fires the stern rocket. A forcefield that surrounds the city of Komar (!) outlines the course and is impervious to your craft's laser fire. Clearing the screen earns a hero's fanfare and 5,000 bonus points, but there are even more foes to battle once the program resets.

The paddle is probably the best of the three available control options, though you can also use either the keyboard or a joystick. The solitaire player can choose to begin with either three or five ships. Although *Omega Race* is not heavily laden with colorful graphics, the player at least has the option of choosing colors for both the background and ships from a range of eight hues.

(Charlene Komar)

WAYOUT

Sirius/Apple II/48K disk

Most maze games give the player a view from high above the puzzling labyrinth. This detaches the player from the action. It's as though you are controlling what is going on, but not truly involved in the quest.

Wouldn't it be fun to be right down in the maze, armed only with a compass and a map that can only tell you where you've been? **Wayout** is just such a program, and the stunning 3-D graphics are totally unlike anything previously encountered on the Apple.

There are 25 mazes to choose from, and for each labyrinth, there is only one door that is the "way out". The main section of the screen display is the three-dimensional look at what's immediately in front of the gamer within the maze. At the bottom of the screen is an overview of the corridors, throughout which you have already traveled.

The compass, which tells the direction in which you are pointed, is in the upper corner. Located in the center of the screen toward the top, there's an odometer to tell just how far you've traveled. The object of the game is to find the exit in the fewest number of steps possible. A small cursor at the bottom of the maze keeps track of your present location.

Once the gamer learns what the mazes look like in 3-D and how to use the mapmaker and compass, finding the way out should be a breeze, right? Wrong!

Designer Paul Edelstein has also introduced a playful Cleptangle into the proceedings. This fella, who looks a lot like a door of bright light, first steals your compass and then your mapmaker. With both those tools gone, it can get quite aggravating inside the maze. When the compass is gone, a question mark replaces the direction arrow and when the mapmaker disappears, no more new trails appear on the overhead view. The best strategy is to take off after the Cleptangle after he takes one or both tools, to retrieve them as quickly as possible.

There is also a wind that blows through these mazes. Fireflies, pushed by the breeze, float past to help the gamer in determining wind direction. Sometimes the wind is so strong that going into it is impossible. Occasionally, it blows from the way out.

Best score for each of the 25 mazes is saved on the disk along with the initials of the skillful gamer. Since the way out of each maze doesn't change, try to remember where the opening was once you find it, to help you in your next attempt.

Wayout uses keyboard, Apple joystick, Atari joystick with Joyport or paddles. This gamer suggests paddle or Atari joystick control. Nine positions on each maze can be saved in case you've got to stop playing before you find the exit.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

Next issue, gamers, **EG** will come to grips with the question of multiple translations by featuring a series of shorter reviews. These capsule-sized critiques will deal with alternative versions of game programs already reviewed in these pages, especially those wherein the play mechanics or action has been altered.

So until next issue, when we go hunting translations, as well as originals, happy trails!

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Join the Pirates of the Outer Void

By NEIL SHAPIRO

SPACE VIKING

SubLogic/Apple II/48K disk

Many of us, beneath our jovial, everyday exteriors, are galaxy hungry megalomaniacs eager for war, invasion and unrestrained looting — at least on video screens. This tactical battle simulation allows you to take the helm of a rapacious interstellar cruiser. Rather than a Casper Milquetoast character such as Captain James T. Kirk, you now become the Scourge of the Spiral Arm, a feared and ferocious space viking.

The game uses the Apple's high-resolution graphics to present not only a view of various instruments, but also an out-the-window view of three-dimensional travel. While there are some problems in this game, it is a worthy attempt to bring something new to one of the most popular of computer pastimes — the space battle game.

Let's embark on a typical voyage of the Starship *Shark* during its 10-year mission of death and destruction.

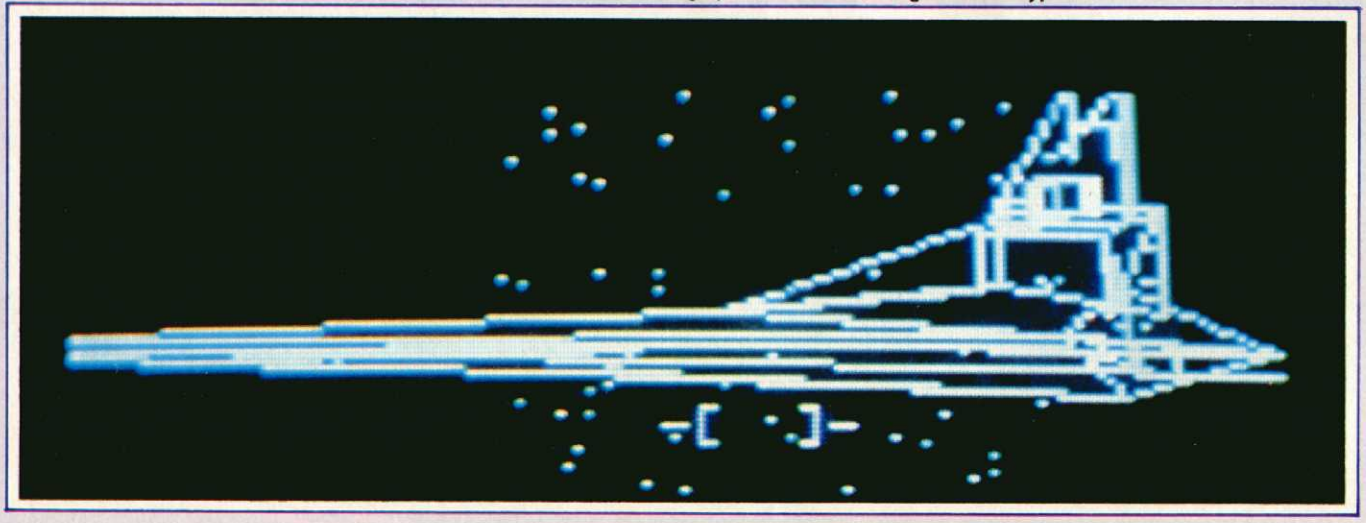
First thing a captain might wish to do is to familiarize himself with the layout of the galaxy. After all, space vikings don't study at the Academy. Calling up the computer allows you to look at the Galaxy Map and the Galaxy Directory. The map shows the 20 star systems awaiting your attention. A joystick or paddle positions a crosshair. When the action button is pressed, it blinks and the screen prints out the name of the star. Later in the game, after you've visited some systems, the directory could tell you a bit about it, but for now your directory has no stored information.

Next, the canny viking will begin ordering his ground forces. The player starts with 10,000 credits in his account. With that money, he will be wise to enlist some troops (the ship starts in orbit around the home planet) and buy some weapons such as tanks, fighters and missiles.

Now the pilot enters the first target star into the Navigation Computer and engages hyperdrive. With a visual effect reminiscent of a few of George Lucas' films, the starship hurtles through the void, while the captain switches to manual control.

At this point, it becomes clear to a novice that a space viking doesn't

Space Vikings uses the most sophisticated graphics ever seen in a game of its type.



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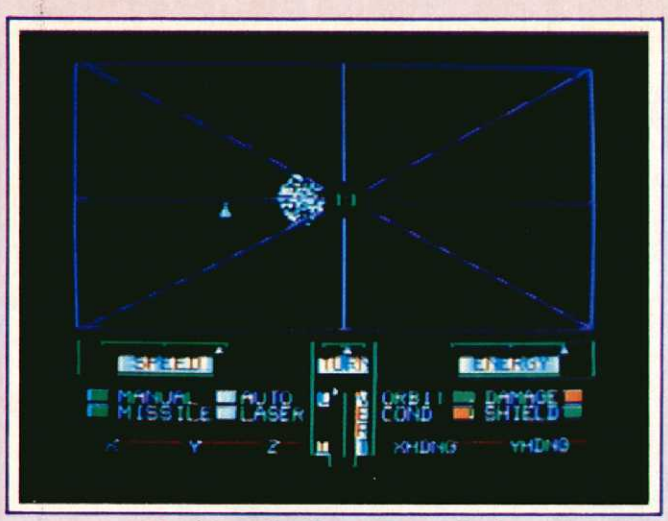
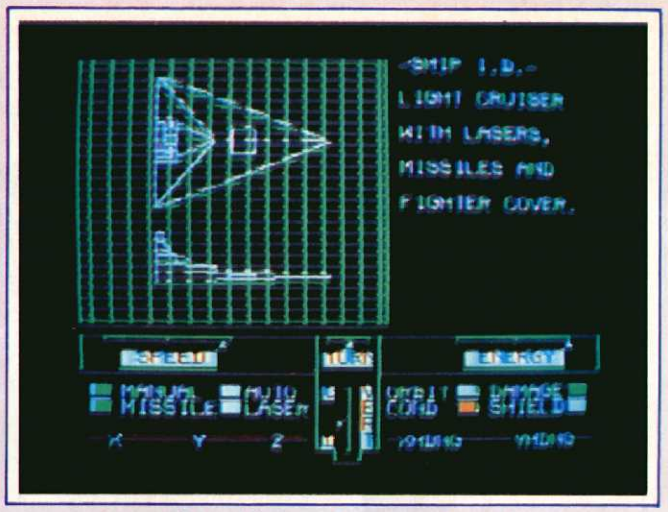


Four intersecting lines meet at a focal point to provide the sighting cursor.



Space Vikings offers a wide variety of visual and tactical displays. Here, it analyzes a Light Cruiser.

write the clearest instruction manual in the universe. Even though the ship possesses radar with which to see the relative position of the planet and its orbiting defense-fighter, and the screen gives coordinate readouts, this reviewer has been unable in many missions to feel fully competent at interpreting the three-dimensional positions. I have often missed the planet entirely. While in many programs, I can attribute such failure to my own ineptitude, this time the manual appears to be at fault. It gives a very skimpy and confusing treatment of one of the program's most salient features.

At any rate, once one lines up on the enemy planet, it's time to close in for the kill. The planet is shown as a sphere of points and its orbiting defense force (usually a star cruiser like your own) is a "wire-frame" image.

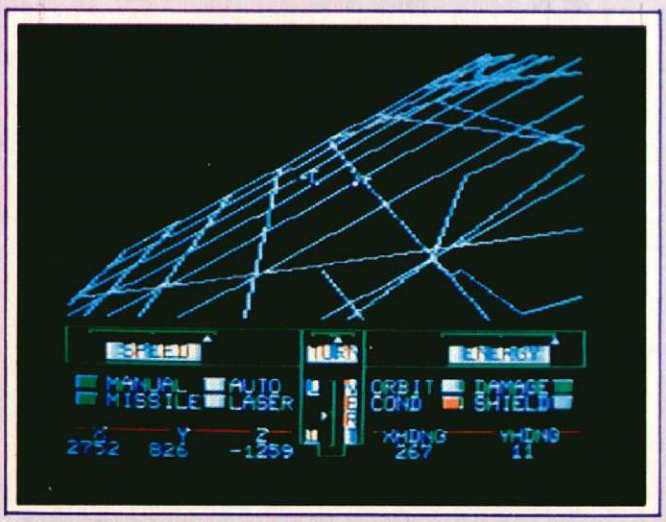
The three-dimensional effect on the approach is downright eerie. Those familiar with SubLogic's **A2-FS1 Flight Simulator** for the Apple (and IBM) may at first be disappointed by the animation. The screen takes nearly a second to update — so the controls are sluggish as a correction takes a second to show any effect on the viewport.

First thing to do is to pound the enemy fighter. A subsidiary radar view tells what kind of craft you are facing. As you race in closer, its identity becomes obvious as it twists and turns in space and comes closer to you. More and more detail is revealed just before the enemy one-man fighters launch! All you can do is sit and take their biting laser blasts — until they are destroyed by your own cruiser's unseen one-man fighters (our own interpretation; the manual gives no hint as to what is happening). Once the enemy's main ship is lined up in your crosshairs, you can fire your missiles with joystick or paddle button. A few well-placed shots will turn it into space debris.

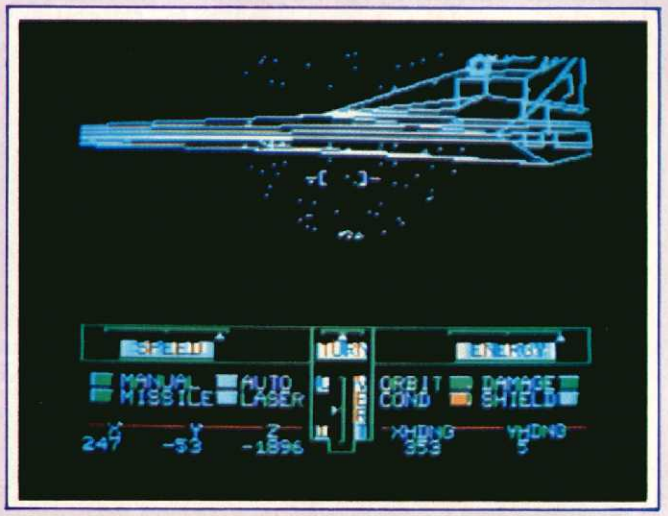
At this point, you'll want to check your damage control and get a readout on the various systems. Wealthier pilots may decide to return to home base for a quick repair, but many will have to continue to fight until they get some cash. To do this, you are required to line up the planet in view and scream on down. When you get close enough, your computer automatically begins the planetary reentry sequence.

Leaving orbit calls up a view of the planet's complex terrain whizzing past. You can now use the joystick (paddles, are next to impossible) to bank the craft, dive and climb — much like SubLogic's earlier flight simulator.

The directions say to "soften up" a planet and hit "cities and other



A strange, 3-D effect is provided by tilting the scene.



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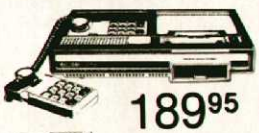

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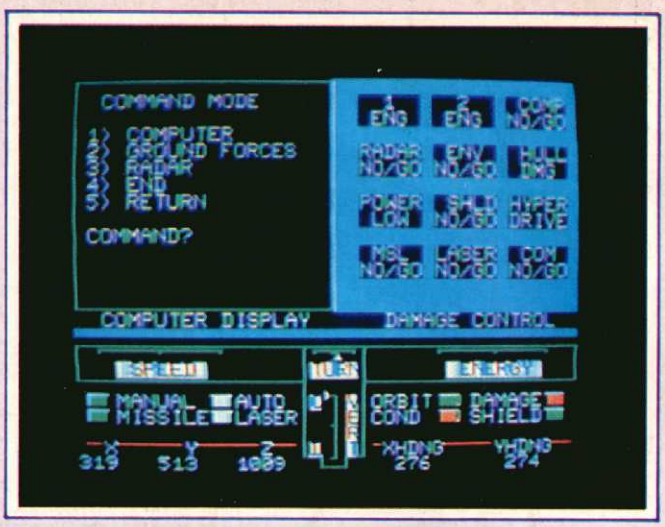
This display from Space Vikings incorporates both graphics and strategic data.



A full tactical readout lists ship's operations on a grid while the computer awaits a command.

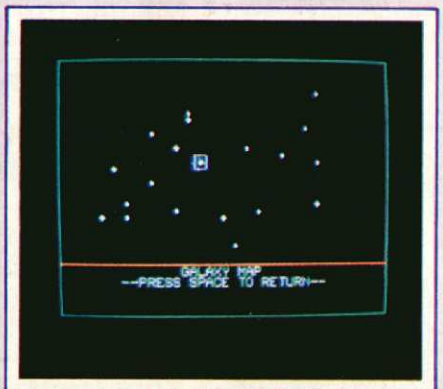
targets." The cover of the manual shows a floating platform of some sort, but we've yet to find one of these targets. Meanwhile, there are still a few one-man fighters left which can laser your ship a few times before turning into cinders. (Unfortunately, the one-man fighters are the program's worst feature. You cannot fight them, they slow down the animation as they come and — finally — the programming is a bit sloppy, causing them to leave little spots of color behind them on the screen when executing a diagonal pass.

Then you climb to 2,000 feet and again achieve orbit. Back to the ground forces — unleash your troops. The screen displays the number of your troops getting killed below and shows how the probability of your success is going up or down. You can recall troops or fight it out. If you win, the troops are set free to loot and steal. They bring back various precious metals and other commodities. At this point you can sell the loot at any base. As it turns out, you can sell the loot to the same planet you took it from — different political parties maybe?

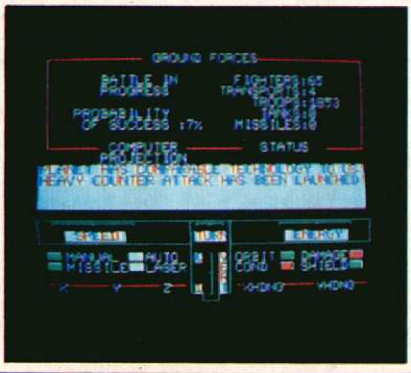
If you desire, you can go back to the planet's surface and try to establish a base, *if* you have the funds to build one. You can recruit new vikings and get your ship repaired and restocked at any planet with a base. And at a planet that has a base, you might wish to raise the morale of your troops by sending them on shore leave. After all, a happy viking is a merry killer.

There's quite a bit of tactical expertise that can be gradually learned as the game is played.

One hint is to attack your own home planet right off. While this sounds harsh, it helps the cause. At first, when the game begins, you are headed right at the enemy cruiser so that you can gain a bit of experience in maneuvering and getting accustomed to the three-dimensional display. Then when you attack with your troops, it will probably be discovered that Earth is a bit of a cosmic patsy. We've never lost a battle there, and the loot is always great.



(Above) Space Vikings' galactic map provides players with an overview of the cosmic geography, while (below), an update on the ground action is displayed.



Once you have destroyed your first defense cruiser, spend some time becoming familiar with the radar display and how it relates in two dimensions to your three-dimensional movement. It is possible to "steer" the ship by keeping an image in mind of how the radar display looks and turn the vessel so that the radar image will spin the planet in front of you. You may even be able to figure out the coordinate system.

As soon as possible, go through the planetary reentry sequence so that you can get some experience navigating your craft above the terrain of a hostile planet. At this point, the controls will be a bit more responsive than they were in space or orbit, and you should find that your starship is now flying more like a plane.

While this might seem like an obvious idea, make sure you don't leave your troops behind. Nothing is more embarrassing than to wipe out an enemy fighter, and suddenly discover that you never recalled your troops after the last battle — and they're 50 light years away, wondering where you went (easier to do than it seems, because there is so much to keep track of and remember).

Space Vikings is a refreshing change of pace from always being the good guy, though it may make the disk less suitable for younger computerists than for sophisticated adults. Although the documentation is less than perfect, as a tactical battle simulation, it's just about tops. G

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ARCADE

New Games in Old Towne

By RICK TEVERBAUGH

Combine turn-of-the-century decor with the latest in electronic games, mix it together handsomely in a single setting and the result is Old Towne, an amusement center with flair in the Southwyck Shopping Mall in Toledo, Ohio.

The area now occupied by Old Towne's amusement center used to be a series of smaller shops which could be rented by individuals to display their wares. That idea failed to turn a profit, so as each lease expired, games and amusements filled up its spot. "We actually didn't get the place looking the way we wanted until April of this year, 1982," explains owner/operator Joe Janicki.

Old Towne houses some 300 games in its 17,000 square feet, but what really sets this arcade apart is the division of the available area into numerous small rooms and a few larger ones. Those coin-ops at the head of the hit parade are rewarded with domiciles of their own. Currently, **Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man, Defender** and **Centipede** have rooms of their own, with more new titles surely entrenched in their own digs by the time you read this.

What keeps these modern electronic marvels from looking out-of-place in this 80 year-old setting of cobblestones and bricks? One method is the blending of old and new through the use of several older arcade games such as **Skee-Ball, Boom Ball,** remote-controlled race cars, and even an old-fashioned shooting gallery.

How are the decisions made regarding which machines to add and when to make changes? "Once a month we sit down and look at what's popular and what isn't. We work very closely with some of the large distributors and often even get prototypes of new machines," said Janicki. "Then we'll usually order small and add to the collection of machines as they become more popular."

AMERICA

For those not interested in the arcade games, Old Towne still has something to attract customers. In the middle of this squared area there is a two-story bar for those over 21. Besides some sit-down versions of the electronic games, there are pool tables, a dart room, a stage and dance floor for musical entertainment and a big-screen television for sports nights. It's a perfect place for Dad to take the kids to. Let them take on the machines on a Saturday afternoon while he enjoys the college football game in comfort on the big screen.

There are some small rides near the entrance of Old Towne for the little kids to enjoy while big brother or sister goes inside. Old Towne has taken some strict security measures to keep the family atmosphere and provide the feeling that school-age children can be left there to play while parents shop in other sections of the mall. There is a pizza parlor and a snack area for those who work up an appetite zapping aliens or scurrying around that newest maze.

Another popular feature of Old Towne is the T-shirt room where there are wearable representations of the most popular machines. Discounts are offered on the price of each T-shirt based on one's performance on that particular game.

There are several special clubs at Old Towne that increase the enjoyment and value of each trip. The V.I.P. Club allows the member to purchase six tokens for $1, once a day for an entire year, and to receive 10 free tokens on his or her birthday. A bonus card enables the bearer to get two free tokens any day of the month. At the end of the month if the bearer has been in 20 times or more, there is a bonus of $5 in free tokens.

There are also videogame contests where the gamer must get a qualifying score on 10 games in order to be eligible for a drawing, wherein the grand prize is a $500 U.S. Savings Bond.

Old Towne is just one more of a growing line of quality amusement arcades designed to give the electronic gamer a safe, friendly and varied way to follow his favorite pursuit.

INSERT COIN HERE

Is This the Next Arkie Winner?

By ROGER C. SHARPE

Q*BERT

Gottlieb

Although 1983 isn't even half over, there is already one machine which some are calling a potential Arcade Award winner for coin-op game of the year, due to some distinctive play-action and graphics that represent a dramatic departure from the norm. Equally surprising is the fact that the quarter-snatcher is a totally home-grown creation from Gottlieb, which had less than overwhelming success with its initial entry in the videogame sweepstakes, **Reactor**.

Nonetheless, **Q*Bert** has single-handedly propelled the company back into the spotlight as something more than just a pinball manufacturer—and with good reason. The image on-screen is eye-catching enough, with a three-dimensional pyramid of 28 brightly colored blocks, popping out from the black background. Enter Q*Bert, an unlikely lead character with a round little body, long snoot and two legs.

Using a single, four-way joystick, players maneuver Q*Bert in his own little world where the goals are fairly straightforward. At the starting level of play, the videogamer hops Q*Bert around, from block to block, in an attempt to land on, and thus change, the color of each block in order to move onto the next round. Besides learning to control the movements of Q*Bert so you don't mistakenly send him off the edge of the pyramid, players must also beware of, and avoid, a cast of ever-present villains including Slick, Sam, Ugg, Wrongway and Coily.

Helping in this battle, especially against Coily, are strategically placed flying discs outside the pyramid, which players can use as an escape. Timing is important, and only adds to the potentiality of further individualizing your approach to playing *Q*Bert*.

Q*BERT

Everyone seems to have a particular pattern of completing the blocks, whether it's side to side, up and down and over — or any number of other combinations. In fact, this inherent freedom is one of *Q*Bert's* main attractions if you're one of the more creative players out there. Each succeeding level gives the opportunity to improvise to a greater degree.

Where previously Q*Bert had only to land on each block once in order to change its color, higher levels of play demand two trips to the same block and a double color change. This gets tricky when you're also keeping track of the wily intruders (Slick and Sam) who can change the colors of the blocks back, forcing Q*Bert to re-trace his "hops" in an effort to finish off the pyramid. To say the least, it can get mighty confusing to see 28 blocks with three different colors while trying to remember which ones have to be re-turned once, and which ones need two visits.

All in all, *Q*Bert* is an unassuming and appealing videogame, which can really hook players with its simple play-action. The graphics are great, sound effects even better (just listen

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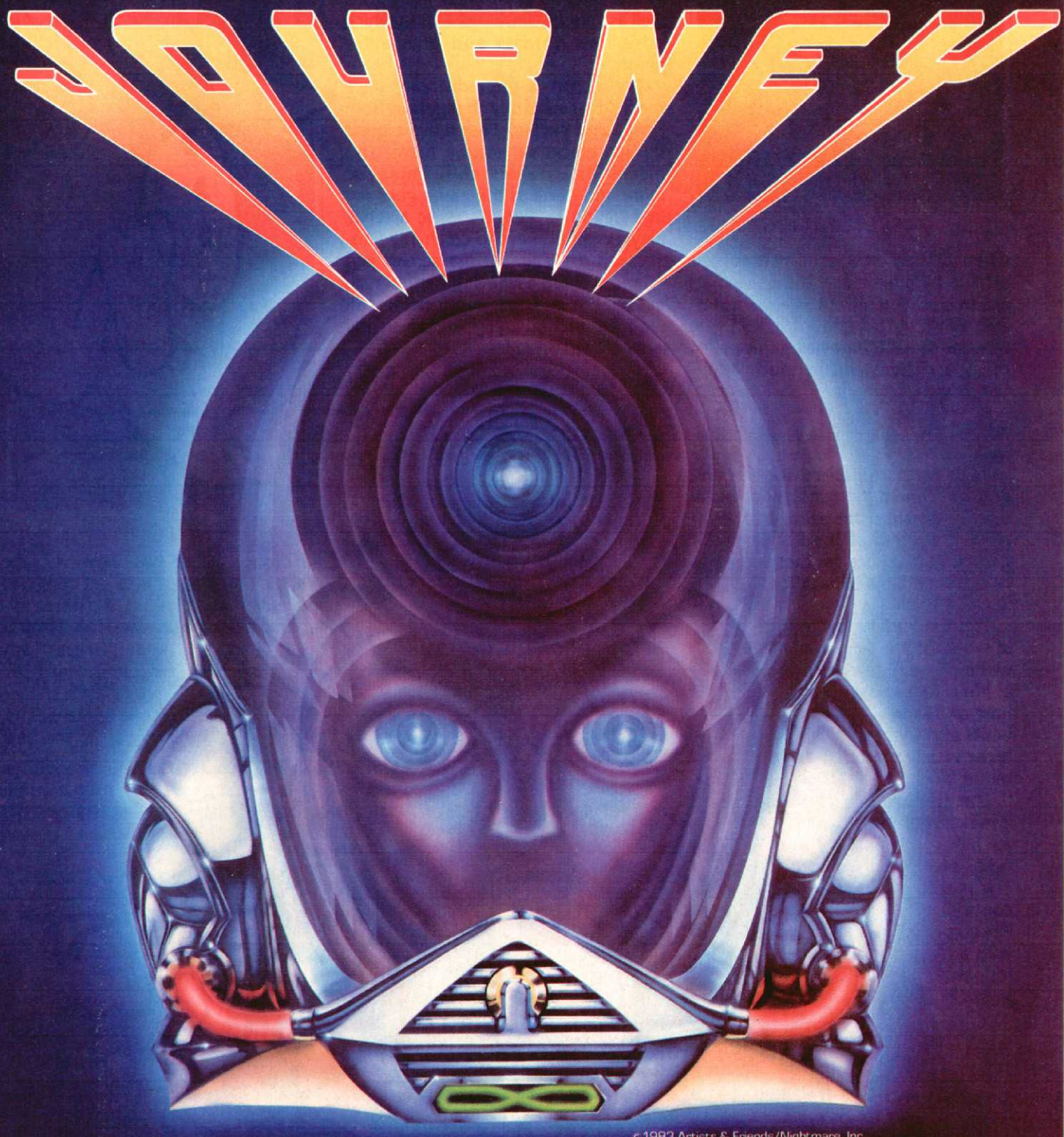

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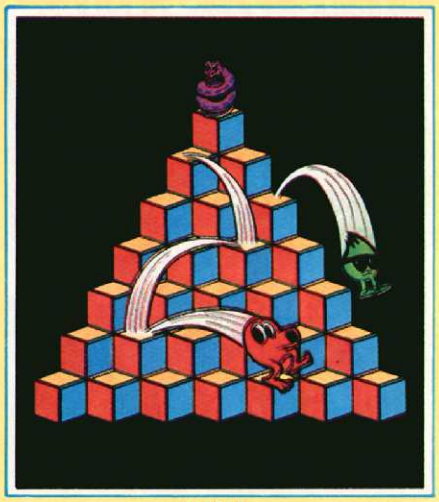


Q*BERT

when Q*Bert gets squashed or falls off the pyramid), and the challenges are ever-changing and always different. With all this going for it, it's no wonder that *Q*Bert* has garnered so many accolades and so much attention.

PENGO

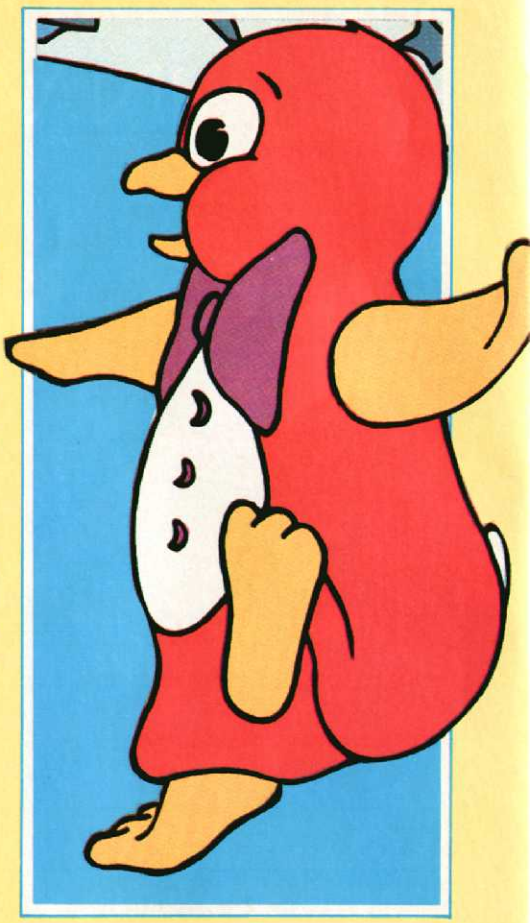
Sega

With cartoon-inspired themes and graphics finding a substantial niche due, in no small measure, to the incredible success of the Pac-family of games, here comes another entry into the "cute" sweepstakes: Sega's **Pengo.**

This time we have the frigid world of a red, yellow and white penguin whose main mission in life is to avoid or destroy a host of deadly Sno-Bees, while also trying to line up three widely scattered diamond blocks.

The playfield is a make-your-own ice block-field maze. The player controlls Pengo with a four-way joystick and a lone button. The latter comes in handy for either pushing an ice block to trap and squash an oncoming Sno-Bee, or to melt the block and create a new pathway. All the while, there are those Sno-Bees to contend with (eight at the beginning of each round), as well as special "flashing" blocks which pose new threats and give extra points.

The action is unpredictable, since the field is constantly changing as both Pengo and the Sno-Bees move around the ice blocks or destroy them. This means that players must improvise more and more as the game goes on. In addition to Pengo's basic arsenal, players can attempt to catch any Sno-Bees on the edge of the screen and "freeze" them by having Pengo push against the wall first. Bonus points can then be earned by going after any immobilized enemies.



Through all of this, however, the real trick for players is to get Pengo to maneuver and line up the three diamond blocks in a row. This temporarily "freezes" any remaining Sno-Bees, providing a chance to score bonus points, and move on to the next

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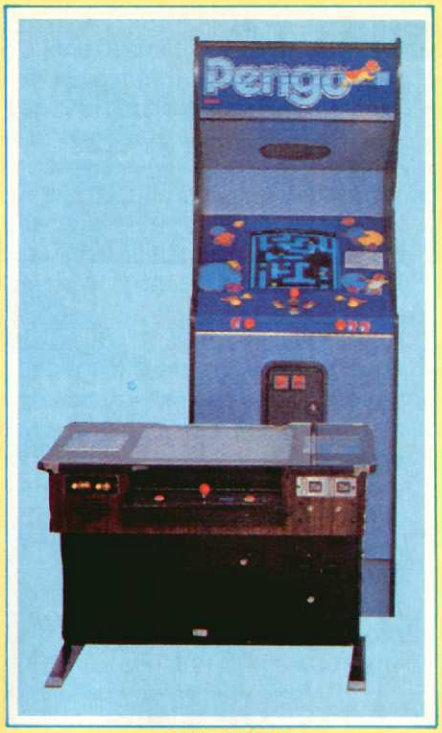


PENGO COIN-OP

level of play. There are 14 levels in all, each more difficult and faster paced, with the element of time thrown in as an extra challenge.

In *Pengo*, players quickly learn that he who hesitates, or takes a wrong turn, is lost. The test is to move decisively and adapt strategies accordingly — when everything around you is "melting", which is enough to even send Chilly Willy scurrying.

FRONT LINE

Taito

Since many new coin-ops are clearly attempting to be less blatantly violent, choosing instead to cloak any unnecessary destruction, Taito hopes to tap war-like feelings in a wide number of players. Rather than draw upon an intergalatic, futuristic confrontation, **Front Line** brings a much more realistic struggle to life, complete with graphics and sound effects as well as a solid storyline.

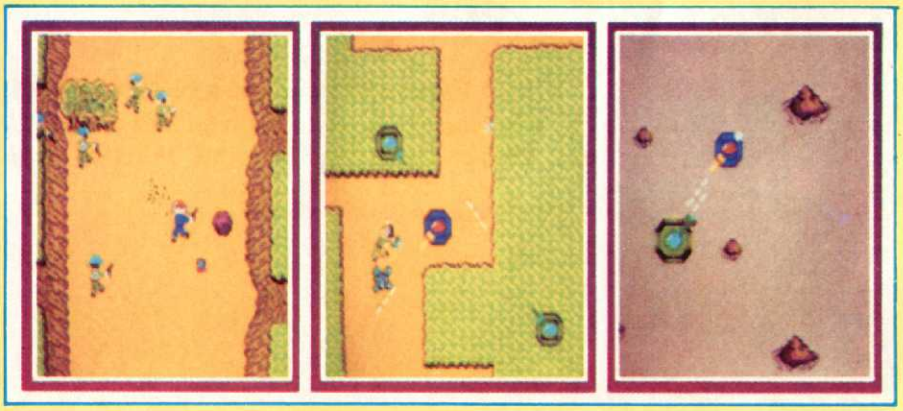
Utilizing a special turning knob for aiming the gun and a joystick for movement, players must get their soldier through enemy territory which bristles with land mines and onrushing adversaries who strike from all directions. The narrow path, with some brushes to hide behind, is an obstacle course that must be traversed successfully before you're permitted to get to the next level of play and a new battle.

Suddenly it's no longer man-to-man combat, but rather an enemy attacking in tanks. If you feel a bit less like a John Wayne, ready to take on anything and everything, and want to try to even up the odds for continued survival, there's the option of pushing a tank button on the control panel to gain your own moveable firepower.

At this stage, *Front Line* requires the gamer to steer through a changing landscape, avoiding enemy foxholes where soldiers with grenades lurk ready for the kill, and destroy the seemingly endless barrage of tanks. The mission is to forge ahead, over a bridge and around brick walls (which can also be used for some momentary protection), in order to get to the enemy fort. Along the way, the gamer's given a chance to switch to a larger tank, with greater firepower, but the final confrontation borrows from that heroic Hollywood spirit, as players must abandon their tanks and lead their soldiers onward, by foot, for a chance at hurling a grenade that will find the mark and bring victory.

A definite departure from the more fantasy-inspired videogame wars, *Front Line* doesn't miss too many details in duplicating the action, suspense and strategy of a realistic war game ably embellished by some strong graphics and faithful sound effects.

Next issue: **Popeye, Rescue** and **Pole Position** will be reviewed.



FRONT LINE PLAYFIELDS

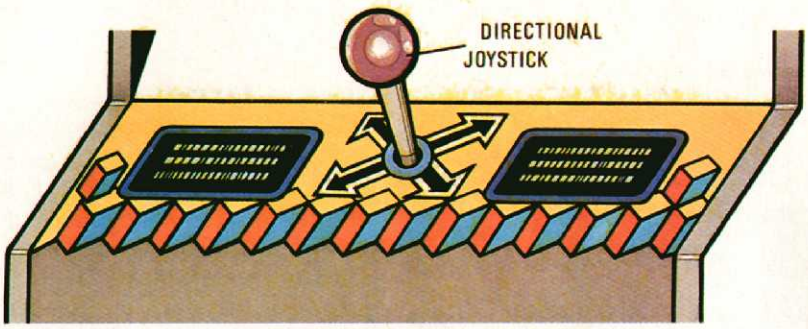
Q*BERT

HOW IT PLAYS

Q*Bert uses only the traditional joystick in the actual play-action. Still, mastery over the stick will require considerable practice.

The object of this game is to jump your little hero from block to block, each time changing the color of that cube, while simultaneously avoiding the bevy of dangerous springing snakes and other nasties that inhabit this pyramid-like playfield.

Start hopping!

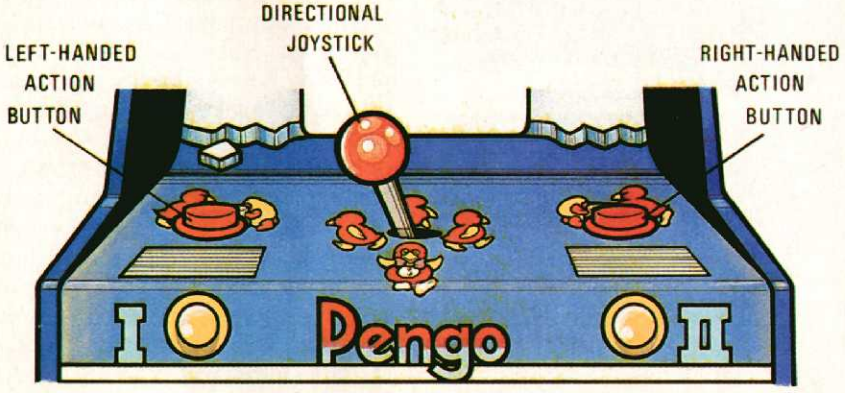


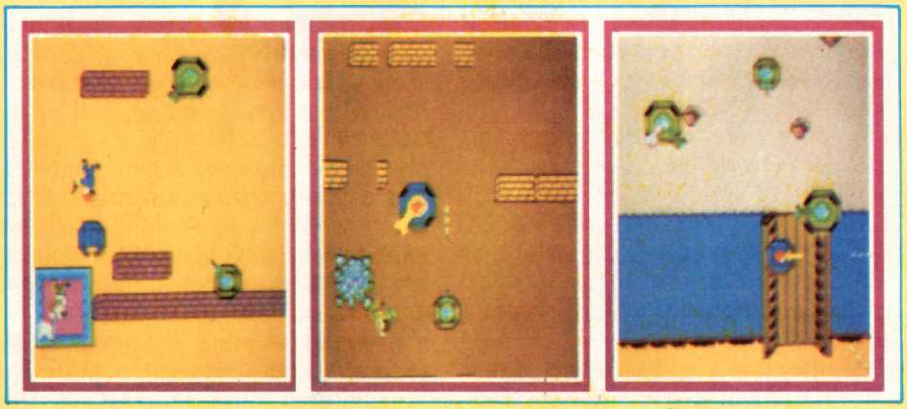
PENGO

HOW IT PLAYS

The actual play-mechanic of Sega's **Pengo** is remarkable in its simplicity. Played much in the fashion of the traditional maze-chase contest, the sole controller is a four-directional joystick used to move the tiny penguin about the playfield.

The mobility of the ice-blocks, however, only complicate the play-action, and then for only a play or two. The left and right buttons set the number of players.





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STRETCH YOUR GAMING DOLLARS WITH...

SECOND-HAND

Levin and Schwartz greet customers in Forest Hills.

Would You Buy a Used Game from These Men?

Cartridges, cartridges, and more cartridges! What started as a trickle of primitive games in the late 1970's has become a tidal wave of ever-more-tantalizing treats for the home arcading gourmet. The goodies list grows longer every month as more companies leap into the fray.

The heavy competition has proven to be to the gamers' advantage. It's no longer difficult to find a cartridge that you want to buy. Just about any **EG** reader can rattle off a list of "must-haves", then add wistfully, "As soon as I can afford them."

But financing a well-stocked, up-to-date library of videogame cartridges doesn't have to cut into the mortgage payments. If you're tired of paying full price for every new game you buy, perhaps it's time you looked into the alternatives that have sprung up to help the beleaguered gamer salvage the family checkbook. If you have a couple of videogame cartridges that you no longer want, and/or don't mind waiting a few extra weeks for that terrific new game, there are a number of new companies that just might have the answer to your problem.

A quick perusal of the ads in this issue of **EG** indicates how many companies have sprung up to accommodate the thrifty gamer. There are clubs, exchanges, and even a company that will buy your old cartridges outright. Each is run differently, and a careful comparison of your own needs and their offerings is sure to help you find an alternative to purchasing videogames at full retail prices.

Used Cartridges, Bought and Sold

The only company we've uncovered to date that deals exclusively in buying and selling used videogame cartridges is the appropriately named Forest Hills Used Video Cartridges. This outfit will buy your old Atari or ColecoVision-compatible cartridges for $2-$9, and sell you used videogame cartridges at a fraction of the original cost! The games range in price from $4.95 to a *high* of $18.95, and the selection has got to be seen to be believed!

If you live anywhere near the New York area, it's worth a trip to the store, as the off-the-shelf selection includes the newest, hottest titles for a pittance. (Due to limited availability, some of the most popular games can't be ordered by mail.) The owner of the storefront, Robert Schwartz, and his old Army Reserve buddy and business associate, Neil Levin, are on the premises seven days a week, and they're only too happy to demonstrate any game for you, whether or not you buy.

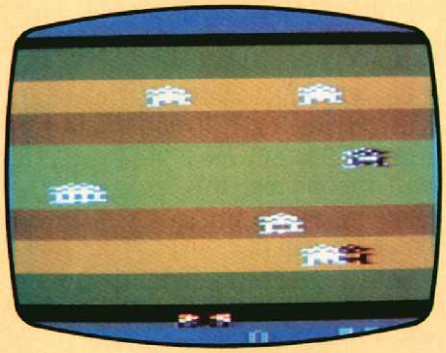
A survey of the day's stock — which changes almost constantly, due to the heavy volume of both buyers and sellers — reveals such titles as **Night Driver** ($8.95), **Asteroids** ($12.95), **Missile Command** ($14.95), and **Adventure, Berzerk, Starmaster, Yars' Revenge, Chopper Command, Pac-Man, Venture** and even the brand-new **Swordquest**, at only $18.95 each!

All cartridges are play-tested twice; first when they come in and again before they're sold. Each is accompanied by the appropriate game booklet, plus anything else the cartridge would come with if you bought it in any department store (except, of course, the warranty, which you only get when you buy the cartridge new).

If you're planning to upgrade your present system, you can sell an old Atari 2600 to Bob and Neil for $50, less if the joysticks are in poor condition.

CARTRIDGES

By TRACIE FORMAN



DEMONS TO DIAMONDS

On the other hand, if you're looking for a great deal on a 2600, you can buy it here for only $80.00. The price, notes Neil, often includes brand-new joysticks. Bob and Neil also promise that once the elusive ColecoVision Atari-adapter becomes available in quantity, it will be available as a trade-in: an Atari VCS and a small charge for a brand-new adapter!

If you don't live in the New York area, don't fret; Forest Hills Used Video Game Cartridges also deals in mail-order requests. Just send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to them at: Forest Hills Used Video Game Cartridges, 63-56 108th Street, Forest Hills, NY 11375. You'll get their latest price list, with both buying and selling prices, and for a $3.00 mailing charge, they'll send you six bimonthly lists. You could even buy cartridges at cut-rate prices and sell them back when you get tired of them!

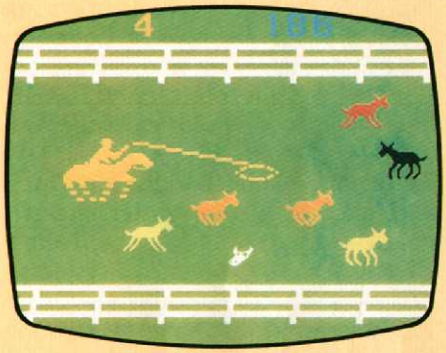
Used Cartridges, Exchanged

At United Software Exchange, you can buy discount, or exchange your old games for a fee ranging from 50¢ to $8.00 for an uneven exchange (based on quality and/or popularity of the games), or $2 to $5 for an even trade.

USE's president, Jerry Davis, has worked out an elaborate charting system which assigns each game a letter symbol. ("A" games are the least popular, while "I" games are the hottest.) Drop him a line at: United Software Exchange, 54 West 2100 South, Suite #6, Salt Lake City, UT 84115, and he'll send you a list of trade-in prices. USE also sends the graph which will tell you how much your old cartridges are worth to exchange.

USE will exchange your Atari-, Intellivision and ColecoVision-compatible games, and even if the game you want isn't presently in stock, you can be put on a priority list if you so choose and the cart will be sent to you as soon as one is available.

Although the graphing system seems a little complicated at first look, it's really easy to use, and could prove an excellent way to trade in old for new. For those who prefer their cartridges spanking-new, USE also deals in new games at slightly lower prices.

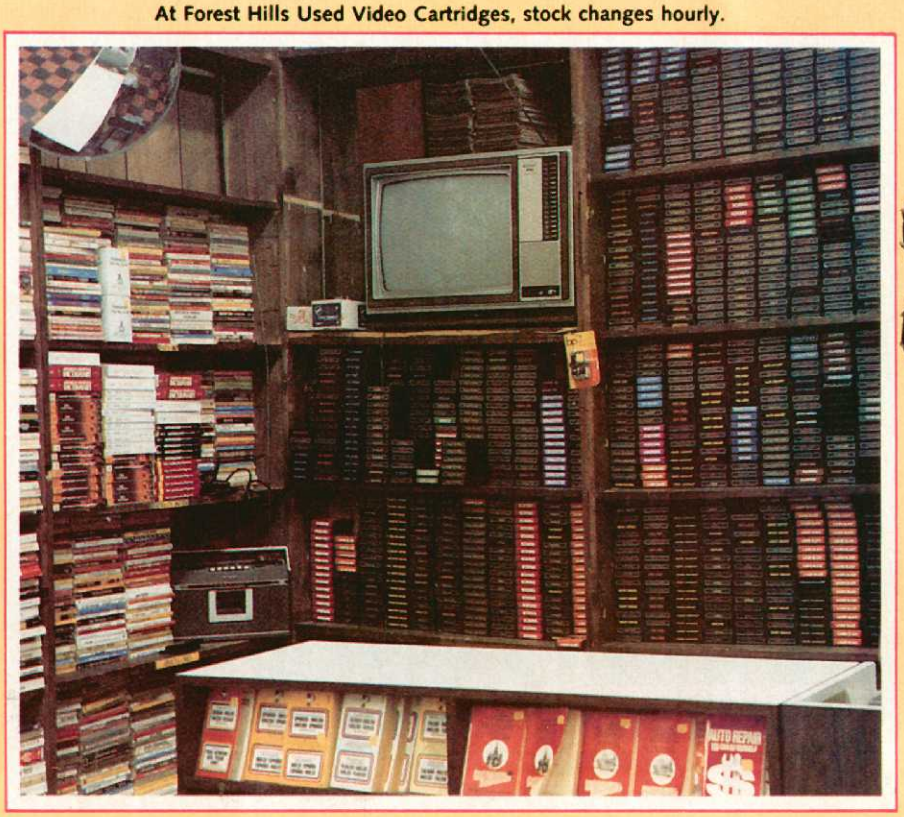


STAMPEDE

Group-Buying Co-Ops

The International Video Co-Op, in Anaheim, CA, is an excellent way to save money on new games if you buy a lot of cartridges. Although the $35

At Forest Hills Used Video Cartridges, stock changes hourly.



SECOND-HAND CARTRIDGES

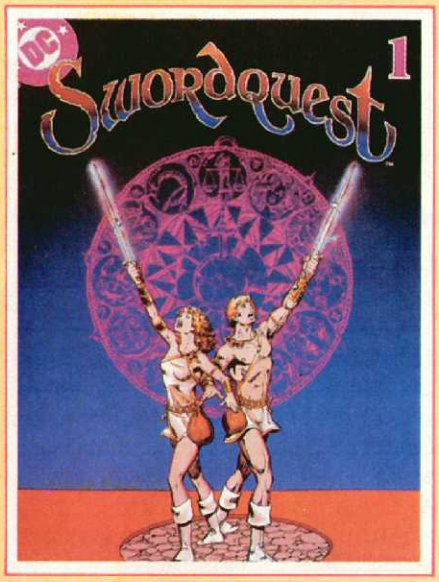
membership fee sounds a little steep, the cartridge prices for members are incredible: for example, a ColecoVision **Turbo** cartridge and driving expansion module costs only $57.95, and the price range for cartridges is a low $8.50 - $28.75.

The International Video Co-Op is also good news for computer fans, as it deals in most computer games (Apple and IBM, to name just two systems). IVC will also satisfy the needs of Odyssey² owners. According to Al Stillwell, the Co-Op's president, any cartridge or game can be rented on a daily basis.

For more information, look for their ad in this issue of **EG**, or call them at (714) 956-8511 for details.

Video Clubs

New York's Video Game All-Stars is a cartridge discount club with a difference. Besides excellent prices on new cartridges for members, the organization also offers members a chance to compete for cash prizes, and is even planning a home-game play-off in which the finals will be held "someplace warm and nice", says president Art Schill. (He can't say more than that right now, because the company is in the middle of negotiating with a major hotel chain.)



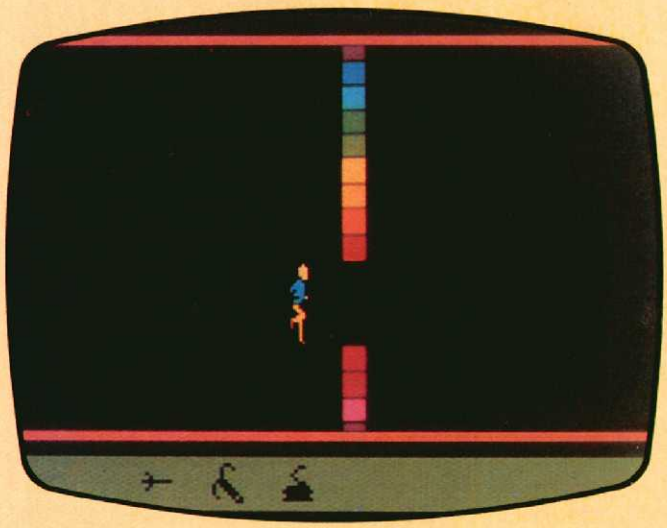
SWORDQUEST

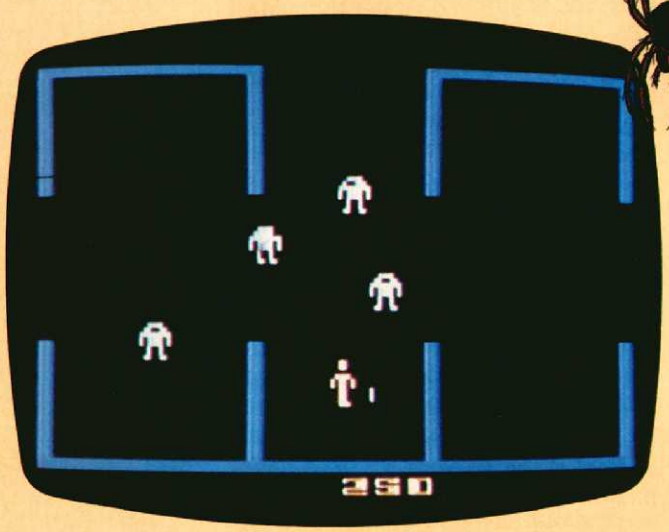
Not only does the $15 membership fee entitle you to compete in the contests, but you'll also receive a monthly newsletter with tips on better playing, features like "Tech Talk", posters, and cartridge reviews.

The club sells any and all cartridges to members at big discounts, and by the time this issue hits the stands, will also handle just about any computer game your little heart could desire. The prices are reasonable: ColecoVision's **Zaxxon** is only $44.99 for members, and Odyssey's **K.C. K-razy Chase** goes for $28.00. Between the newsletter and the prices, this club is worth checking out if you're serious about home games. You can join by sending $15 to Video Game All-Stars, 666 Old Country Road, Garden City, NY 11530, and if you're a really hot player, you can actually make money in the deal—the All-Stars pay $5 to members for sending in tips for better play—*if* they're printed in the newsletter.

These are a few of the sources for used cartridges we unearthed in the course of researching the used cartridge situation. Certainly, there are many, many more local operators offering similar — or possibly even superior — deals on second-hand electronic entertainment. The specific companies and organizations mentioned here will, however, at least give you a place to start your bargain hunt. Use the prices cited as a means of comparison.

Happy hunting!


SWORDQUEST (PLAYFIELD)



BERZERK

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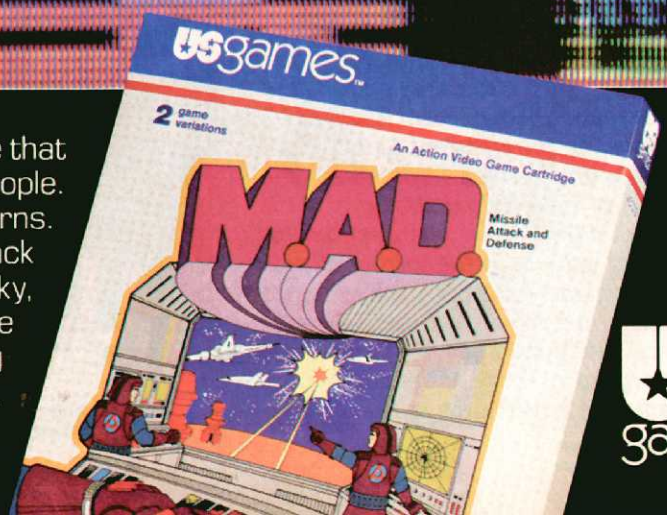

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US games

Plain and Fancy Games Vie for Quarters

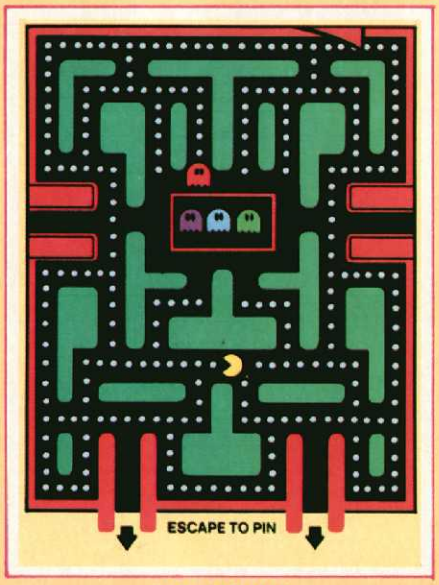
By ROGER C. SHARPE

As the new year progresses, some trends are becoming apparent in coin-operated pinball machines. Players are witnessing a dual attack of basic game design and more innovative approaches. Although the appeal for flipper games has waned considerably in the United States, the appetite for hitting down targets and propelling a silver ball around a board, seems to be on the upswing in Europe, giving impetus to sustained production on at least a limited basis.

Interestingly, with fewer models being introduced, the rising quality of game mechanics and diversity in design hasn't really resulted in a fall-off of excitement or challenge.

In fact, the emphasis seems to be in a totally different direction. For proof, consider this issue's selection and those mentioned in recent issues of **EG** *such as the re-release of Bally's* **Eight Ball Deluxe**, *which still retains the charm of the original classic.*

In addition, there has been an increased activity in the testing of new flipper game concepts, such as an ill-fated effort from Williams Electronics called **Thunderball**. *It attempted to incorporate some videogame programming twists, such as the completion of different "waves", with the integration of "multi"-multi-ball play that sends a veritable deluge of balls across the playfield when specific target sequences are achieved. There may be a few of these still lurking around local game rooms and, if you're lucky enough to notice one, give it a try and see if you don't agree that the machine has gone in a viable direction.*



BABY PAC-MAN

Williams continues very active, in terms of pinball, with two more new models on deck. One is a nice translation of the tremendously successful videogame, **Defender**, *in a pinball cabinet with the same, familiar graphics and sound effects as well as smart bombs, baiters and all the other friends from that revolutionary screen gem. On view next month, Defender, the pinball machine, holds some promise for the shape of things to come, as a way to formulate different design themes.*

On another front, the rumor grapevine is twanging with the speculation that Atari, which already tried to hit a responsive chord with pinball, will return to the pinball wars with a test model that supposedly serves up some novel twists and departures from the norm.

For now, there's the further wedding of pinball and videogames, less from the Defender mold and more in keeping with what Gottlieb attempted in **Caveman**. *It comes from Bally with a theme that all are sure to recognize.*

BABY PAC-MAN

Bally

First there was **Pac-Man**, then a *Ms.*

version, followed by a *Mr. and Mrs.* in the guise of a pinball machine, and now, the family tree sprouts new branches with a coin-op combo that looks like a videogame but also has a smaller-sized pinball field, enhanced by play-action that ties the two worlds together rather nicely.

Here's a machine that really calls into play an individual's skill not only in manipulating a joystick, but also flippers, with the balance between the two weighted more heavily toward that flat board of targets, kick-out holes and spinners.

Things start off with an updated maze and little "pac" trying to steer away from his ghostly adversaries. Take a closer look, and you'll notice that those much-welcome power pellets are missing, along with a chance to attack back rather than just escape. There *is* hope. At the lower end of the screen are two escape paths on the right and left, for entry into the other world of play and a chance to build up resources for the subsequent return to the maze.

Control, previously being the lone center joystick, now shifts to the top yellow buttons on the panel, or the more conventional placement of flipper buttons on the side of the cabinet. Press the right one (that's the right *side* button), and the ball zooms up from between the flippers. Now you're ready to tackle the pinball portion of **Baby Pac-Man.**

The layout is fairly straightforward and symmetrical, incorporating a center set-up of five drop targets which can lead to spelling out P-A-C-M-A-N. This feat earns an energizer on the videogame maze. Behind this is a "hoop-loop", as Bally calls it. It's nothing more esoteric than a captive ball that can be hit from side to side and also win an energizer when accomplished.

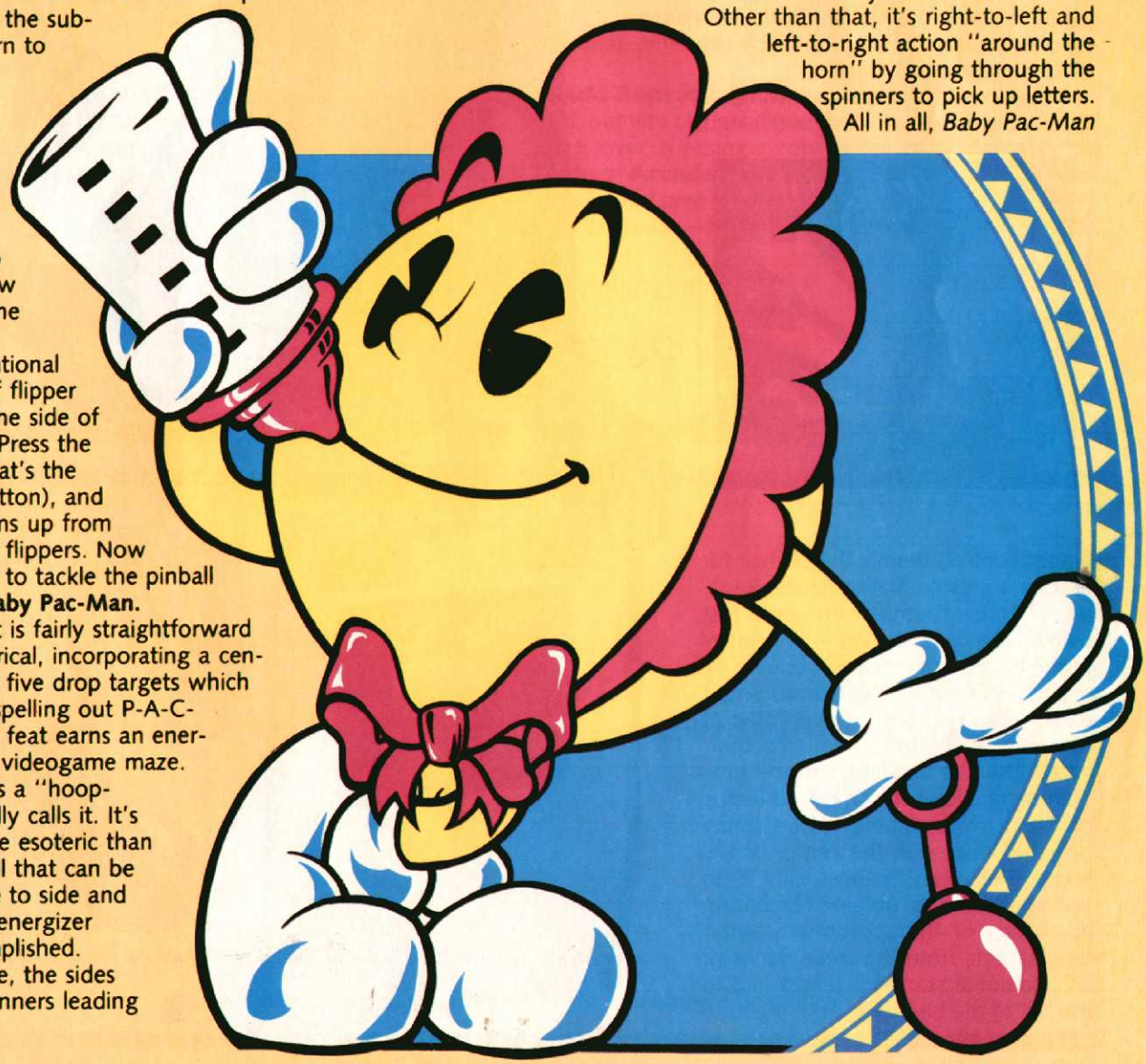
Meanwhile, the sides offer top spinners leading

BABY PAC-MAN

over and down to long running lanes, with the right side offering a chance to spell out the word T-U-N-N-E-L. Turning this trick increases Baby Pac's speed on the screen through the side tunnels. The left side sports the letters F-R-U-I-T-S and gives gamers a chance to cop extra point targets in the maze. In addition, two kick-out holes at the upper reaches of the board provide ways to build up these letters, while also gaining entry back to the maze, when lit. But there's a strategy to all of this, as is always the case in any machine.

If a player doesn't do that well in the pinball portion of the game, it's then a matter of run-for-your-life in the video maze, since no escape is possible and no energizers are evident to provide help along the way. You need to get what you can in terms of pellets, and hope that you're that much better off for the next turn in this three-ball, three-pac game. So, in many respects, point values are greater on the pinball board, although what you can do there will ultimately effect your chances in the maze.

As for this reduced playfield area, those center drop targets are enticing, but also lethal if you hit them head-on. Other than that, it's right-to-left and left-to-right action "around the horn" by going through the spinners to pick up letters. All in all, *Baby Pac-Man*



"pacs" a wallop as the first truly integrative pin/vid that's not only fun to play but also challenging.

WARLOK

Williams

After trying a number of variations on a theme including **Hyperball** with its dual gun mechanism, **Varkon**, which put pinball into a videogame cabinet, and **Thunderball**, already mentioned for its innovative approach, Williams has now gone back to basics with this new effort. Hopefully, it won't get lost in the shuffle if **Defender** proves to be the solid performer initial tests suggest it is. However, the play on **Warlok** isn't to be missed, as it serves up a bit of everything for both the novice and skilled pinballers.

Resurrecting, in general, the geometry of a previous Williams model called **Blackout**, *Warlok* improves upon the overall design with some strong modifications from top to bottom and side to side. There's a mixture of long, satisfying shots with ample rewards and shorter-range targets which can also increase point totals.

From the plunger, the ball swings up to three lanes where, along with a right

WARLOK

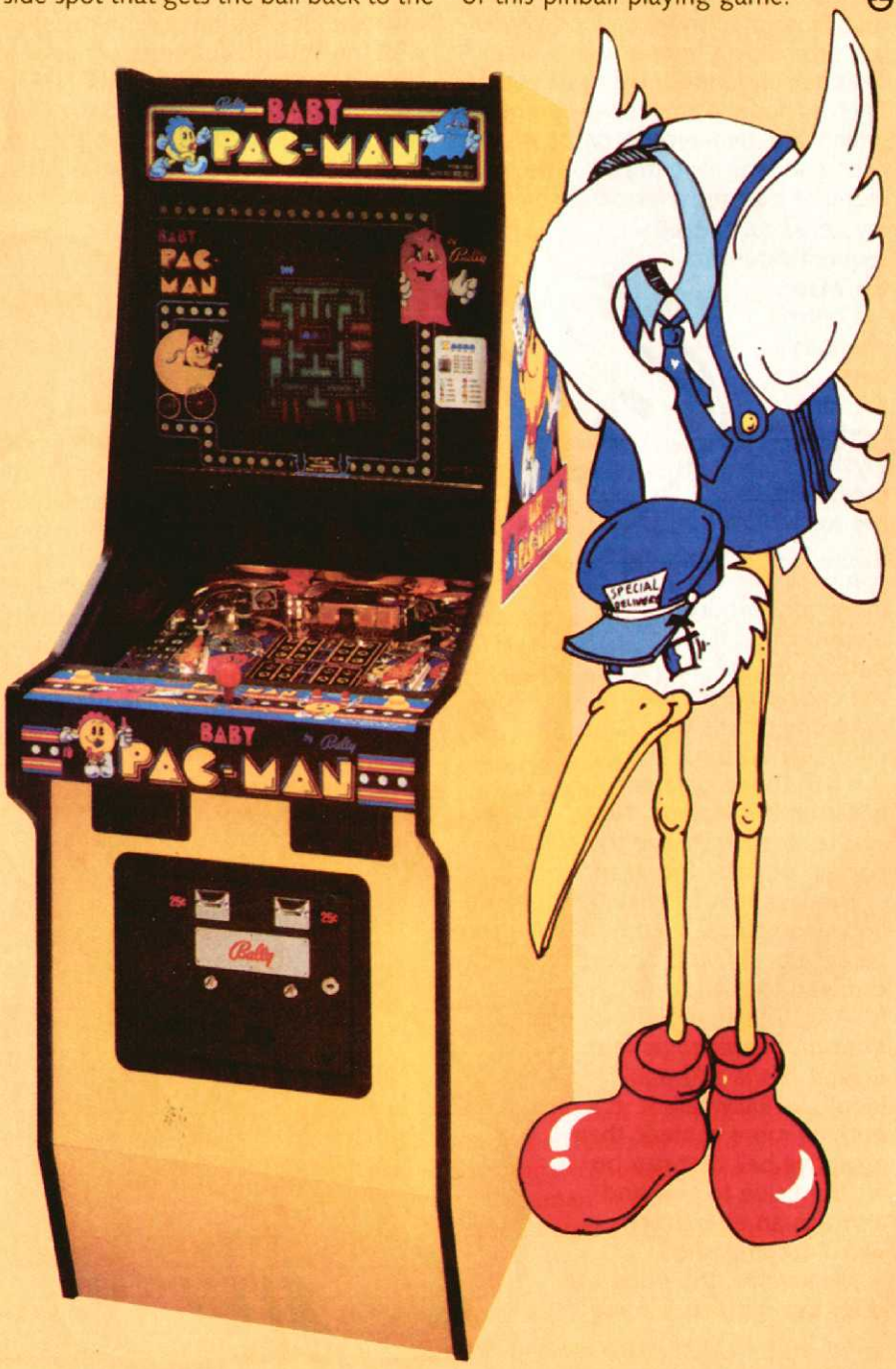
flipper control, there's the chance for getting bonus multiplier values. A set-up of three thumper bumpers just below offers solid action in the center of the board, but doesn't cut down on the access to a top right drop target bank, one in midfield and another at the left side. This trio is number coordinated (1's, 2's and 3's) and the programming allows for an added bonus of "lining up" the numbers via an array of lights located in the center of the board. This raises the possibility of an extra ball existing, obtained by hitting down any of the appropriate center drop targets from the three banks or an additional stand-up target just to the left of the bumpers. And, if you're good enough and can do this often enough, the machine will store the extra balls you've earned, in multiple amounts, keeping this a very alive feature throughout the game.

Finish off the entire "card" of seven lights on the three rows, and it's suddenly time to get mega-points with specials and extra ball lights popping up as well as double bonus values.

And that's only part of *Warlok*. Located on the left side is the entry for the orbit shot which begins with a spinner and leads up and over, then around and down through a right side spinner that will result in special point totals and rewards as well as a sound and light show. Lastly, for some rest periods along the way, there's a right side spot that gets the ball back to the plunger and also tallies points already earned on the field.

The action is fast, evenly balanced and strategically designed for those wanting to get into the essence of pinball play at its smoothest. There are nice touches throughout, fair roll-downs and areas that present challenging variations on the usual assortment of playfield features found on today's flipper games.

Well worth the price of admission, *Warlok* doesn't serve up a great deal of fancy effects such as multi-ball play or a double-level playfield. Yet the attention to design detail and effective programming shows that authentic pinball players are behind the creation of this pinball playing game. ⊖



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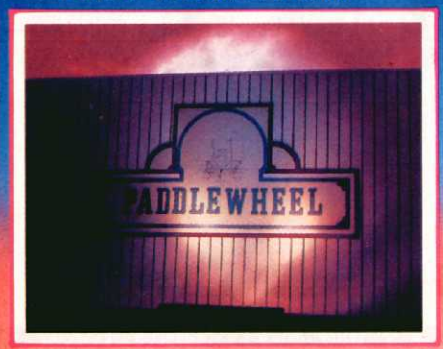
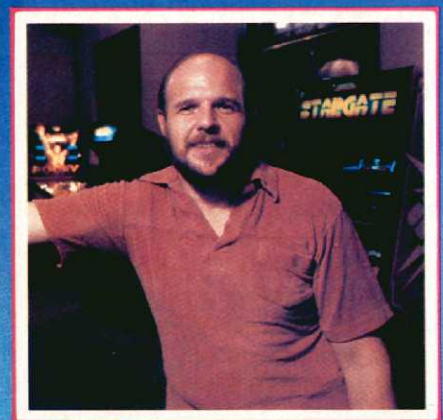
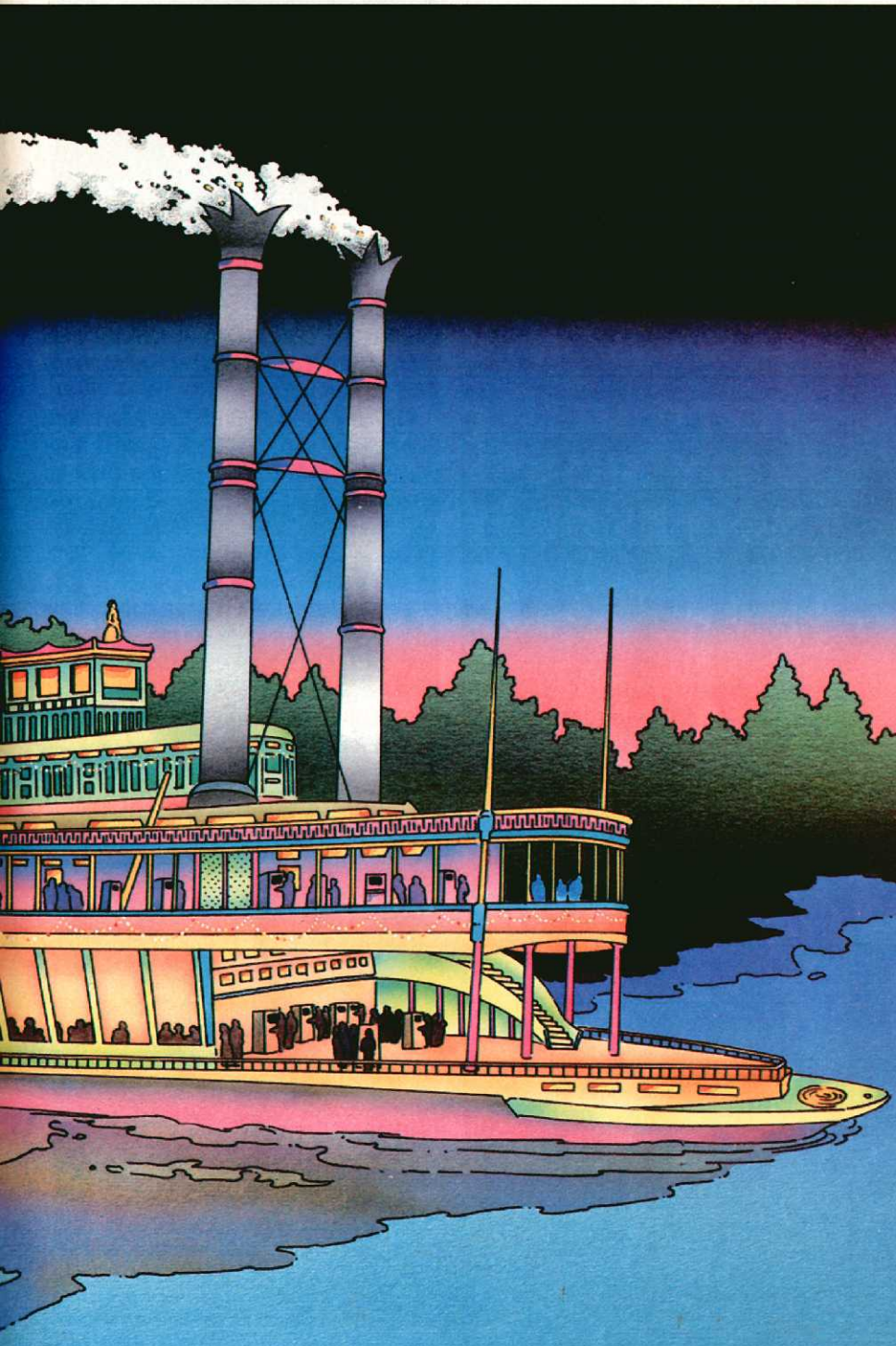




The Paddlewheel's proprietor lounges inside the colorful New Orleans fun center

DING ON THE RIVER



Playing Games on the Mississippi

By DAVID LUSTIG

Louisiana. The mere mention of this southern state conjurs up a myriad of visions.

It is the state where the all-powerful Mississippi River, that majestic, liquid highway, empties into the Gulf of Mexico. It summons memories of an earlier time with its white-columned mansions built before the Civil War. It is Lake Pontchartrain, bayous and the memories of Huey Long. Louisiana is the state where the then fledgling United States of America won its only battle against the British in the War of 1812. It is oil and natural gas wells helping to keep a nation warm in the winter, cool in the summertime and traveling to Grandma's house anytime. It is New Iberia, Shreveport, Baton Rouge and Hammond.

Louisiana, the only state that forgoes counties in favor of parishes — a part of its heavy French influence — is 31st in size in relation to its united neighbors, but when it comes to arcades and videogame fun, it is among the biggest and best. Case in point, "The Paddlewheel" in New Orleans.

More than just an arcade, The Paddlewheel is a nightclub and is so listed in the telephone directory. Whatever patrons go to the The Paddlewheel for — the rock and roll club, the arcades, or both — it is a good time that, under certain circumstances, goes on for 24 hours a day. Got your curiosity piqued? Read on.

To be fair, well-run arcades in New Orleans can look deceptively similar

ARCADING ON THE RIVER

A young gamer tries her hand at Zaxxon in the Paddlewheel's arcade

to one anywhere else in the country. Walk into any arcade and you'll find the old stand-bys: *Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man* and even *Centipede*. Over in one spot you'll find some machines, kept to appeal to those wishing to take a short break from electronics for a moment.

During peak hours, the largest crowds will hover around the newest releases from the major manufacturers. A well-run arcade is clean, with some form of security. The owners and manager will be very protective about "image", for there are still city councils that feel the only good arcade is a closed one.

Occasionally however, without setting standards for others, an arcade comes along with something just a little special. The neophyte visitor can't always put a finger on just what it is. Getting to talk to the manager and his crew, watching the business go through its paces as customers come and go, it becomes apparent that "it" is not one big thing, but a lot of little ones, all combining to make for a great time. Such a place is The Paddlewheel.

Set among a number of restaurants and shops, The Paddlewheel is actually two completely separate ventures combined to make one larger facility. Part of the building is comprised of the rock and roll club, which, according to its many patrons, is probably the number one rock spot in New Orleans. The other part is made up of the arcade area. While a windowed wall separates the two, it only takes a twist of a doorknob to step from one in to the other.

The location is fascinating as well. The Paddlewheel is built right on Lake Pontchartrain, so much so, in fact, that the building is actually on pilings driven into the lake. When the music has quieted down and the machines are between plays, the gentle lapping of the waves and the natural reverberation of walking on a wooden deck resonates loud and clear.

A modern-day pinball machine flanks an open window leading on deck

Stepping inside, there is manager Lou Waller and his crew, who are all more than friendly, and seem truly glad to see you.

Oh yes, you'll find *Pac-Man* and *Centipede*, and yes, over against a far wall stand the obligatory pinball machines. And of course, the newest and latest videos are here as well. There is also something more here. There is *ambiance*.

The Paddlewheel is not particularly gaudy — there are a minimum of flashing lights and disco noises. In their place is just what you would hope to expect in a city with the history and charm of New Orleans: just a little

A wide-angle look at the exterior of the remarkable Paddlewheel

bit of good ol' Southern hospitality.

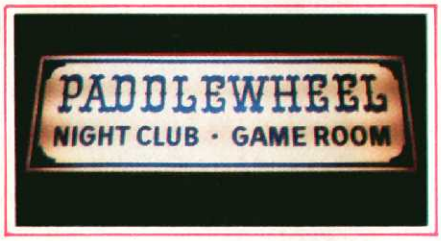
The walls are wood-paneled, the lights designed in the shape of antique gaslights, and the many windows (the building dates to the turn of the century) are adorned with tinted shades. Without the glare of direct sunlight, the visitor can still see the lake.

"It's a lakefront atmosphere," says manager Waller. "We just want The Paddlewheel to be a fun time, a place where people will come back again and again."

And a lakefront atmosphere it is, with many of the traditional arcade rules not applicable here.

Just come in from swimming and aren't wearing shoes? Come on in. Picked up a hamburger next store and are swishing down a soft drink? They are as welcome as you, just don't put them on the machines. And go to the arcade on a Wednesday, Friday or weekend night and the sounds of video machines will be augmented by some of the best bands in the city, playing right next store.

Sounds great so far, but what about closing hours? Well, there are none. Generally, it's when everything begins to die down, usually this side of midnight. But if the fun and the crowds don't shut down, that's all right too, because The Paddlewheel will stay



open as long as there are lots of people. Sometimes that *has* turned into an all-nighter.

Not to put a damper on things, but there *are* a few conditions to all this entertainment. If you're under 17 years old, don't expect to get near the machines or the club until after 3 p.m. on school days. And after 10 p.m., everyone under 17 understands it's time to head home.

Well, how do you like it? Music, food, arcade games, pleasant surroundings, friendly employees, and a view of the lake. Could there be anything more? You bet there is. On Sundays, the club offers a chicken barbecue complete with baked beans, cole slaw and an oyster bar, all on the house.

But, you wouldn't expect anything less from a good time, Southern style. G

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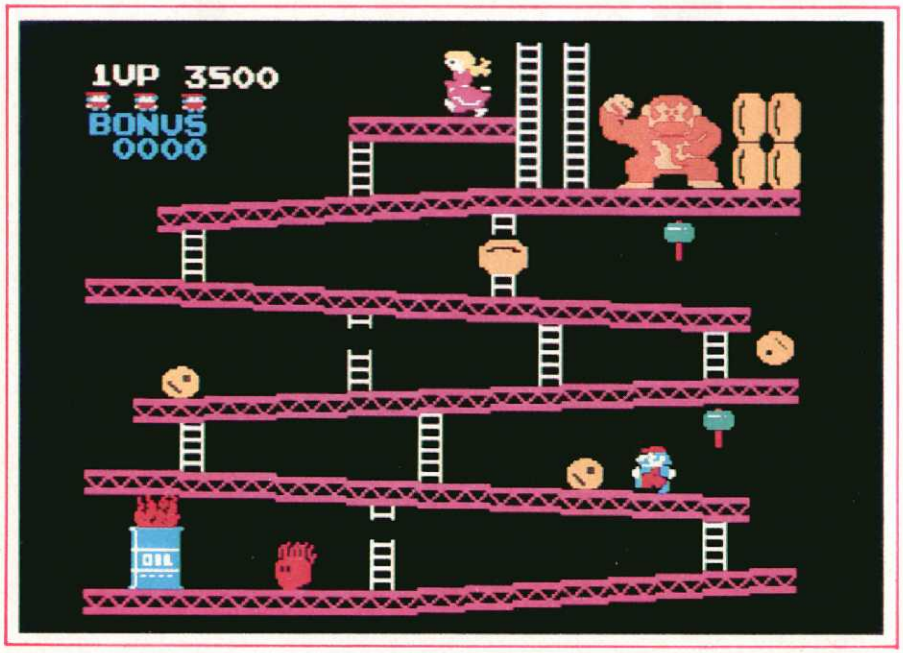
By THE GAME DOCTOR

Being the crusty old curmudgeon **EG** readers have grown to know so well, it's not easy for the old doctor to break down and be a sweetheart. But I have to tell you, the letters I've been receiving lately strongly indicate that our hobby contains some of the most interesting and analytical minds in the world today.

Take the fantastic dissection of the ColecoVision version of **Donkey Kong** that came down the chute from Jeff Winter of Edina, MN. Jeff not only uncovered the more obvious glitches in the program — for example, Mario climbs ladders at express speed when you take him up one rung, pauses for a heartbeat, then continues his sojourn in double-time — he even mastered the daunting third scenario, as well as uncovering several cute little shortcuts. Kudos, Jeff, and despite the fact that your letter isn't *really* a question, and actually belongs in one of our strategy-oriented columns, your work will not go unrewarded. Drop us a note with your address and the doc'll send you out some gaming goodies.

Several problems that can be put to use by opportunistic gamers on the second rack — bolts and fireballs — were also cleverly uncovered by Kevin Christensen of Beverly, MA. Remember, computers are programmed by human beings — some of whom even resemble ourselves, at least when they aren't hunched over an Apple II or graphics tablet — and human beings are imperfect. If the computer has information that can, under certain circumstances, be considered faulty, it isn't the fault of the software, but the people who created it.

Okay, now let's get on to the questions before I have to start charging for these office visits and recommending specialists, such as my good friend and videogolf partner, Dr. Sigmund Shaft, a whiz at eye, ear, nose *and* joystick practice. You never heard so many sore throats and squeaky joysticks in a waiting room in your life!



DONKEY KONG

Q: *I own a Fairchild Channel F system and was wondering if any other companies — aside from Fairchild — make games for it?*

(Tom Fiegener, Dawson, NB)

A: Actually, Tom, Fairchild hasn't owned the rights to Channel F for several years, long ago having sold out of the videogame market. The system wound up with Zircon, a California-based company that has released a smattering of new titles, but doesn't look to be churning out games at any great speed.

As for independent vendors, the outlook is *extremely* doubtful. Even the Odyssey² is having difficulty in convincing third-party software companies to create compatible games, and there are probably close to a million O² systems out there, while a maximum of a quarter-million Channel F's remain in circulation — with the majority of those relegated to closets or sold at garage sales.

Nothing like a lack of software to kill off interest in a system. It's primarily the constant infusion of fresh blood, in terms of new game titles, that'll be responsible for breathing life back into a dying system.

Q: *I would like to know why games differ from arcade to arcade. For example, in one place, I can play* **Space Odyssey** *and start out with four ships with the option of earning an extra craft at 80,000 points. In another arcade I can start with three ships and gain a bonus ship at 40,000.*

(Brian Glawson, Forest City, NC)

A: Today's coin-op machines are

scaled in terms of difficulty factors.

A game such as Midway's **Tron**, for example, offers arcade owners no less than *nine* difficulty levels, any of which can be preset with the flip of a switch located at the rear of the machine. When a machine first hits the gaming floor, the sharp operator realizes that players must first learn and master the mechanics of play. Therefore, many coin-ops start life at the lowest possible setting.

Once it becomes obvious that the local gamers have drawn a bead on the game at its current level of difficulty, the owner simply flicks the difficulty switch up a notch or two. Intelligently used, these options prolong interest in a title far longer than might ordinarily be expected.

Unfortunately, a small number of arcade owners, in their rush to snatch as many quarters as possible, instantly

TRON

set up their new titles at impossibly high levels. The result: a quick intake of quarters followed by a dry spell that never breaks. The operator blames the machine, but simple use of sequenced difficulty switches could have saved the day for both coin-op and operator.

Q: *I have a VIC-20 and while hunting for accessories, I noticed that some*

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ATARI VCS WITH STARPATH SUPER CHARGER

programs can be loaded by means of a standard cassette tape player. I also read (in **EG**, *of course) that the Starpath Supercharger games are also stored on cassettes. I was wondering therefore, if the Supercharger games are compatible with the VIC. If they are not, could you explain why?*

(Jeff Henderson, Goreville, IL)

A: Sorry, Jeff, the Supercharger is designed to work only on VCS or VCS-compatible systems (such as Coleco's VCS Expansion Module for the ColecoVision). You see, virtually all computers can load and store programs via audio cassette tape, but exactly *what* is encoded on that tape makes all the difference in the world. A cassette program designed for play on an Apple won't work on an Atari computer tape drive, or on a TRS-80.

The Supercharger is designed to increase both the memory storage space and RAM available to the VCS, which isn't really a computer at all, technically speaking. Unlike the VIC-20, Atari 400/800 or Apple, the VCS is actually a micro-processor designed solely for game-playing.

The Supercharger, however, doesn't even seem to be working with everybody's expansion modules from ColecoVision, as the following letter attests. . .

Q: *I recently heard some rumors to the effect that Intellivision was going out of business. Is this true and, if so, why?*

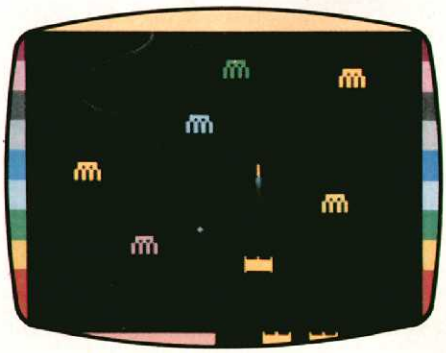
(Nick Sisto, Staten Island, NY)

A: When a company offers rebates, some people begin to get nervous. There's probably no cause to worry. A newly designed keyboard is heading to market and there's also a Mattel Electronics-produced computer, dubbed the Aquarius, on the way. So keep the faith, Nick.

Q: *As a ColecoVision owner, I sold my VCS in order to buy the expansion module. I now find that the Supercharger won't fit all the way into the module and the game* **King Kong** *from Tigervision won't work at all. Will Coleco be making a new and improved module or am I stuck?*

(Andy Herzman, Huntington Sta., NY)

A: In order to avoid being nailed by n Atari lawsuit, it was necessary for Coleco to structure its VCS module to keep from violating any proprietary Atari technology. In making these changes, something may have been lost. *None* of the Tigervision games, we have discovered, will run on the module. This is because the VCS is a



THRESHOLD (TIGERVISION)

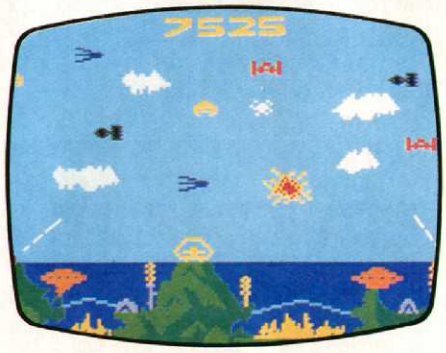
INTELLIVISION WITH ORIGINAL KEYBOARD

software-oriented system, and software-construction differs from company to company.

At the moment, reports on the Supercharger's compatibility are unsettled, and should be determined before any purchase is made. However, here's a hint to owners of the VCS expansion module: don't jam your cartridges down into the system slot. Just carefully ease the games in the socket until contact is made and flip on the system. If nothing comes up on the screen, turn off the system and try inserting the cartridge a little deeper, which should do the trick.

Obviously, however, there are some bugs remaining to be exterminated.

Q&A QUICKIES: Ted Meyer of Boston, MA wonders whether or not the VCS adapter offered for the VIC-20 by Protecto is a legitimate piece of hardware, and whether or not Protecto is a reputable company. From our vantage point at least, Protecto has proven itself an extremely viable, reputable and dependable, if somewhat small, hardware and software house. Its games, collected from independent designers for the VIC-20, are largely excellent and what we've seen of Protecto hardware looks to be both high-quality and low-priced. Technical reviews of various Protecto products are coming in the near future. . .Robert Kudray of Phoenix, AZ obviously likes Imagic's **Atlantis** for the Intellivision — after 11 days of play the screen went blank. Did it run out of program? I dunno, Robert, maybe your Intellivision was trying to tell you something (boy, these Intellivisionaries must be in better shape than any other gamers in the world — the doc is constantly amazed at complaints from gamers of



ATLANTIS

that persuasion complaining about games dropping dead after marathon play sessions. Eleven days, however, has *got* to be the record. . .

Ah yes, before I forget — be here next month for a super column in which your favorite cartridge croaker reveals the secret behind the delay in loading ColecoVision games, and answers one of my favorite questions yet. A bright young fellow from Montgomery asks the Doc how he picks which Q's get A'd! The ultimate secret revealed! Now anyone who'd miss *that* just doesn't compute! So stay on-line for the next Q&A! Fer sure.

That about does it for this session, gang. Be here same time next issue for more chit-chat from the programmable practitioner. Aloha.

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By JOYCE WORLEY

STAR HAWK

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Star Hawk puts the arcader in the seat of a jet fighter. The plane taxis down the runway, then takes off into the night sky. As it climbs higher, the enemy appears in the cockpit window. Turn and bank with the joystick until the blue enemy fighter plane is centered in the laser sight, then fire. A satisfying explosion marks the hit, and you gain one point for every ship downed. If you miss, the enemy sees you and takes evasive action, making the next shot even harder. Beware of the ground defensive fire. There's flak all around and if any hits your plane, the fighter goes into a spin and drops 16,000 miles. If it is not above that height when struck, it will crash.

Continue battling the aliens, shooting down as many as possible, until a beep warns that time and fuel are running out. To make it home safely, the plane must descend to under 10,000 miles before the landing sequence begins. Then press land and the computer guides Star Hawk back to Earth.

Star Hawk can be played at four skill levels. At its lowest setting, it's simple to fly a mission, make a few kills and get safely home again before fuel runs out (after four minutes of play). At the most difficult setting, *Star Hawk* is more challenging. The enemy flies much faster and is harder to line up in the laser sight. Also, there's more flak bursting around, making the flight even more perilous.

The play mechanics are fairly simple. Press the firing button once and the plane automatically rolls down the airstrip and lifts off to the sound of a series of double tones. When the tones stop rising and the runway disappears, the plane is in the air. But you must immediately pull back on the joystick to gain altitude or you'll crash. Don't touch that stick until the take off is complete, though, as any interference with the automatic pilot in take off and landing sequences will wreck the plane!

Once in the air, the joystick maneuvers the plane in banks and turns, to dive or gain altitude. The indicator at the right of the screen shows the

STAR HAWK

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MARVEL
AB

altitude, from zero to 99,000 miles. There are even more targets between 10,000 and 75,000 miles, so that's where you'll want to do your hunting. But there's more flak between 10,000 and 75,000 miles, too, so the risks are proportionately higher.

Your prey are the small blue space fighters. Center the laser firing sight on a ship and shoot. The arcader scores one point for each enemy plane downed. However, he must safely land the plane in order to keep the score. Crash for any reason at all and the tally is lost!

At the end of three minutes of play, a warning beep alerts the gamer that he's almost out of time, and a fuel gauge appears on the right side of the screen. It takes a few moments to descend, so start the plane down at once. When the altitude indicator reads under 10,000 miles, press the land button and the automatic pilot takes over. Once safely grounded, the final score flashes on the display.

Star Hawk is a fresh new look at flight simulation as a gaming device. The take off and landing sequences are very attractively executed. The red landing strip lights, and the horizon stretched across the dark screen in front of the plane, are very effective, even if minimally illustrated. Once in the air, the horizon stays in view beneath the plane and sways left and right, depending on how the gamer banks and turns his plane. The alien spacecrafts are lovely blue ships, cleverly matrixed in side, frontal and three-quarter views that look very realistic. When Star Hawk blasts one of the enemies, a red starburst pattern signals the strike. Sound also enhances the unit dramatically. The rising notes signalling the ascent, and falling notes marking the descent, add a sense of urgency to the entire game. In the air, a low, but not unpleasant, hum mimics the sound of airplane engines.

If you liked the Cinematronics coin-operated version of *Star Hawk*, be sure to take a close look at this table-top version. It's a solid winner in the Action Arcade Series of hand-held games from Mattel, that will keep you up in the air for a long time.

KING KONG

Tiger/$46

King Kong has stolen Penelope and carried her to the top of a building. Penelope's sweetheart is a fireman, and this brave hero must climb the skyscraper to win her back. But King Kong is throwing bombs which the fireman must leap over if he expects to reach the fifth level where the girl stands waiting. There are fire axes scattered through the building to help him in his struggles. These destroy the bombs while the fireman battles his way upward. But each axe loses its power after only a few moments. Then it's just the fireman, the girl, and the ape, in a familiar battle of skill and wits over brute strength.

The Tiger version of this classic climbing game is housed in a mini arcade-style cabinet that should have special appeal to younger gamers. Bright cartoons of the ape, the girl and the fireman adorn the outside of the bright blue unit. Even the insides, in front of the playscreen, are unexpectedly decorated with colorful pictures of the gorilla and the hero.

KING KONG STAND-ALONE

The controls are clearly marked and easy to understand even for a child. There's an on/off switch, a one-or-two-player mode button, function button to start the game, jump button and joystick controller. A special feature seems designed with kids in mind: the unit shuts off automatically after 30 seconds if a new game isn't started. This prevents battery drain.

Musical sound effects mark every on-screen action throughout the game. The display screen has a four digit readout that retains the high score, the skill levels, and five floors of the building with ladders connecting the levels. Kong and the lady start at

the bottom, but Kong swiftly scampers to the top of the building where he stands hurling bombs on the head of the hapless hero.

The fireman must climb the building using the ladders between floors, without being hit by the rolling bombs. He can jump up and grab the fire axes scattered through the building. Fire axes make it possible to destroy bombs instead of just leaping them. But the power gained from each axe dies quickly, and then the hero must depend on his skill at jumping over the pesky things.

If the fireman succeeds in reaching the top where his lady stands waiting, he wins a kiss while an illuminated word balloon says "I love you". But that's the end of his reward, because he then must start over at the bottom and try again. The game continues until the fireman has been killed three times.

The graphics are matrixed on a glass screen in the back of the unit, with a light source behind the screen. The light moves from position to position, according to the moves made by the arcader using the controls in the front of the game. All of the elements of the game are visible on-screen at the same time, even the matrixed positions for each of the fireman's jumps. This gives a peculiar appearance to the screen, since all those shadowy images of the fireman can be seen, like a serpentine conga line winding its way over the playfield. On the other hand, each individual element is more detailed than would be possible in fluorescent playfields, and looks quite effective when spotlighted during the gaming sequence.

The arcader must practice to gain proficiency with the jump button. The fireman can jump only when he's moving. It's easy to walk him along with the joystick, but in order to get him off the ground and into the air at the precise moment desired, it takes skill in timing and coordination.

This is a good looking unit with a cabinet that has a lot of "kid appeal". Once the gamer gets the knack of moving the fireman along and safely jumping bombs, King Kong will keep him climbing the walls to save the pretty Penelope and win her favors.

PAC-MAN GAME WATCH

Nelsonic/$30

It's very fashionable to own a watch that not only tells time, but provides a bit of electronic entertainment as well.

PAC-MAN GAME WATCH

It's nice to have a small diversion for those moments when time hangs heavy on your hands, and what could be more convenient than having it strapped to your wrist. Numerous companies have products to amuse the bored arcader when he has time to spare. Whether you're waiting for a bus, killing time between classes, or holding on the phone, toying with your watch is the most popular way to fill the minutes.

The official Midway *Pac-Man Game Watch* by Nelsonic is a cheerful device to charm everyone who loved the coin-op classic. It has all the functions needed in a timepiece. There's a continuous digital readout of hours and minutes with a PM indicator, and a 24-hour alarm to get you to your appointment on time. Then, once you've arrived where you're supposed to be, the *Pac-Man Game Watch* helps fill the moments while you wait for your date to get ready, the dentist to show up, or class to begin.

The gobbler races through a mini-maze containing 12 dots and magic fruit prizes. Only one ghost monster pursues him in the first round, but each new maze adds another monster to join the chase.

There are some nice touches. The power dots are actually pretty little stars, and the fruit prizes are attractively drawn. The watch retains the high game score so you can vie with your own record over and over. Electronic sound effects add a lot of excitement to the game, but you can play silently on those occasions when the cheerful melodies might be inappropriate for your surroundings.

Unfortunately, the gobbler can only eat from right to left. He must back up until he's at the right of the dot he wants to gobble. This takes a little getting used to. On the other hand, the watch boasts scrolling tunnels so Pac-Man can swiftly pass from one edge of the screen to the other. The display is quite large and easy to see. Another big plus is the control system. Movement is by four directional buttons, and they operate very smoothly, giving the kind of quick response that gamers like.

The watch probably won't win any beauty contests. But it's very sporty, with a black plastic case decorated with colorful *Pac-Man* symbols, and a matching black band that's handsome in a new wave-ish sort of way.

But the play is the thing, and the *Pac-Man Game Watch* is just what the doctor ordered for gobble-game enthusiasts. It operates well, tells time accurately, has a musical alarm that isn't at all hard to wake up to. And, best of all, it plays a good game that will keep you coming back to see if you can raise your top score by just a few points more!

INFERNO, EMERGENCY

Pop Games, by Hattori&Co., Ltd./$25,$40

When palm-sized games burst on the American scene, they quickly spread over the country. This can only be because they are so delightful. They almost always have outstandingly cute graphics coupled with good, if not so outstanding, play-action. Combine this with a handy pocket-size format that also gives the correct time, and you've got a real hit!

The Pop Game of **Inferno** is a case in point. Manufactured by K. Hattori & Co. in Japan, and marketed in this country by Technotel, *Inferno* uses fire fighting as its theme, and challenges the arcader to rescue the unfortunate

READER REPLAY

Continued from page 21

work on other Atari machines and vice versa?

Finally, is it possible to get back issues of **EG**? I lost the issue that reviewed **Jawbreaker**. Thank you.

Brian S. Johnson
Chicago, IL

Ed: Frankly, Brian, outside of our "Test Lab" column, we try to keep the technical data to a minimum. Remember **EG's** *motto: "The play's the thing!" ROM and RAM alone do not a great game make, it's how the space and screen movement are utilized by the software creators.*

Beyond all this is the fact that technical specifications do change from early development through prototype on to shipped versions. The 64K figure applied to the 5200 is, as far as we can tell, cumulative RAM and ROM — 48K ROM and 16K RAM. And remember, this is potential — no current cartridges for the system involve more than 16K ROM.

CERTIFICATE X!

I just read your March issue and thought it was great, but I *do* have a bone to pick with you. In glancing through your editorial "Switch On" section, your first pledge was that you would not advertise a product that is not appropriate to anyone under 21. However, in your December 1982 issue, on page 102, there is an ad for X-rated videogames. I wish you would choose your advertisers a little more carefully if you are going to live up to pledge number one.

Mike Jeffery
Address unknown

Ed: You're absolutely right about that December 1982 ad, but let's explain how it happened. First off, the pledge that appeared three issues later was predicated largely on that very ad. **EG** *had intended from the very first that no X-rated videogames would be advertised on our pages. The ad that appeared was pre-purchased free space, belonging to a regular retail advertiser who decides each month at the last minute which of his new items he wishes to highlight in that spot. Unhappily, he chose the Mystique games that month.*

Editor Arnie Katz immediately held a summit meeting. It was too late to do anything about that December ad, but both the retailer and **EG** *agreed that no further material of this sort would be printed.*

In other words, that tiny ad space was a mistake. Our pledge three issues later reaffirms our policy. Aside from that December spot, you will never see an ad inappropriate for any of our younger readers.

Nobody likes to turn down advertising, Mike, but believe us when we tell you that several large advertising contracts were instantly rejected by **EG** *because of questionable subject matter. We're not censors — and do not, in fact, believe in censorship in any form. As a magazine that is read at least partially by young, impressionable hobbyists, we feel as you do that such material is inappropriate.*

So please forgive us for the single slip-up and we promise you'll never see anything like that in these pages again!

IT'S IN THE CARTS!

I've been reading **EG** for months now and truly enjoy it. But I do wish you would include more coverage on carts (game cartridges). I make this request, because it is the carts that are my greatest investment and interest.

I've found your opinion on the games rewarding both economically and entertainment-wise.

Matt Hammond
Medford, MA

Ed: Actually, Matt, our motto here at **EG** *is: "The play's the thing". In other words, the software is what we're all about. That's why there are columns for news, programmable videogames, computer software, stand-alones, coin-ops and strategy features each issue, dealing with that very subject — games! The problem is that there are so many new games that it's virtually impossible to cover them all in a monthly magazine. That's one of the reasons we feel our "Players Guide" series is so valuable; it allows us to examine entire categories of games rather than one or two individual titles.*

But if you really want the inside stuff, may we suggest a subscription to our biweekly newsletter, Arcade Express (see ad elsewhere in this issue). Besides all the news, it provides capsule reviews of the very latest in videogames, computer games, coin-ops, stand-alones and accessories.

Send all letters regarding **EG** to Reader Replay c/o **EG**, 235 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003. We love to hear from the people for whom we create this magazine.

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INFERNO HAND-HELD

victims as they climb down fire escapes from the top of a skyscraper. Move the ladder back and forth under the flaming building to position it where the victim is about to fall. Each successful rescue scores one point, but if you miss a falling rail, tally a loss. A grim red cross ambulance then parks beside the building in mute reproach for your error. For every person that falls, the gamer scores another miss, until four ambulances line the street and the game ends.

To add some excitement, there are chunks of flaming debris falling from the building. If the fire ladder brushes against the debris, score another miss. Worse yet, if the debris blows into the gas tanks at the right of the playfield, the gas bursts into flames, and you lose again. But if you move the ladder all the way to the right quickly enough, it splashes a stream of water to keep the tanks from igniting. For this, you score 10 points.

Inferno is very easy to play. Just bounce the ladder left and right, catching the victims as they leap from the building, and put out the occasional ball of debris that threatens the gas tanks. Game two is a faster version of the same thing. Here, the arcader may face situations where he is unable to catch the falling victim and put out the debris before the tanks explode. Since he scores 10 points for stopping the tanks from catching fire, and only one point for saving the victim, it makes gruesome sense to put out the debris and let the person flounder. Fortunately it's only a game, so it's not really necessary to worry about the morality of the choice!

The game also keeps time, has a handy alarm, and can be played with or without sound. With *Inferno* tucked into your shirt pocket, you'll always have something to do!

Hattori has carried the mini-format one step further, by introducing a

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portable AM radio to the tiny hand-held size. The Pop Game of **Emergency** is a four-in-one hit, since it contains a digital alarm-clock, a two skill-level game, and a radio complete with earphones. So far, this is the very first radio/game/watch, but there are sure to be more later this year. Hattori already has three radio/game/watches ready to ship, and still other companies will also add radios to their pocket games.

Emergency is another rescue game, this time in outer space. Astronauts are jumping from a space station, and the gamer must maneuver a rescue pod under each falling spaceman to catch him. An enemy spacecraft is also on-screen, firing missiles at the station. If the pod collides with a missile, score a miss. If the shell zeroes in on the space base, move the pod to the extreme right to fire at the attacker. Failure to do this scores another miss. Four such losses and the game ends, although successfully defeating an enemy missile is worth 10 points.

Emergency has all the features that make *Inferno* a hit, with the addition of a tiny radio which operates with an earphone. (The format is just too small to accommodate speakers!) While the play-action on both games is not complicated, the animation is very well done, the different functions operate smoothly, and best of all, they're so cute you just can't afford *not* to love them!

EMERGENCY HAND-HELD

Once again, stand-alone mavens are left standing in awe at the tremendous technological breakthroughs witnessed in a matter of months. The tiny amusements that once consisted of LEDs blinking behind a transparency, have grown far beyond their physical dimensions, becoming the little giants of the field!

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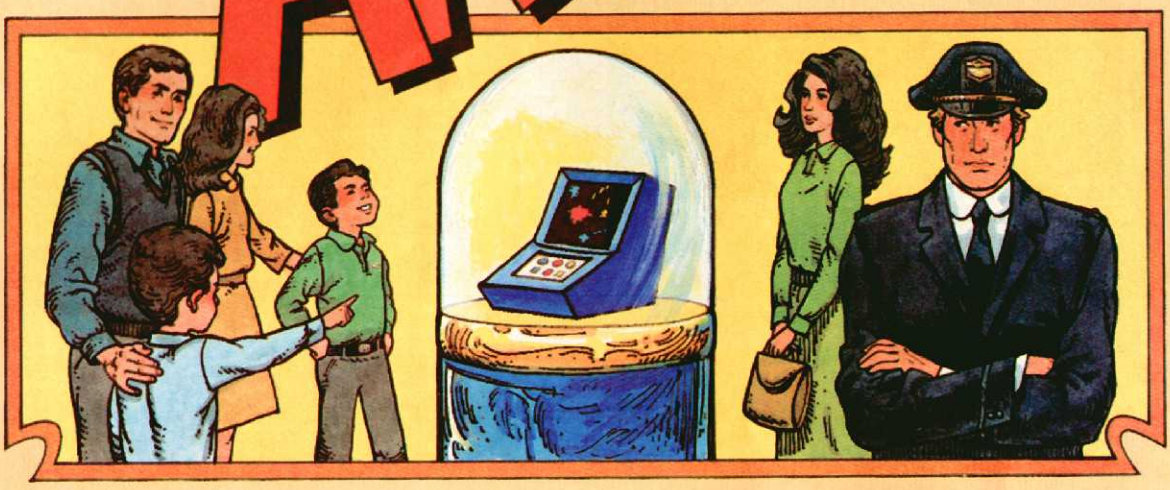


Big Sports Action in Tiny Packages

By JOYCE WORLEY

Last summer's leaves are on the ground. The air is crisp and frigid, and it's a good time to think about cold weather sports. Entex has a couple of carts for the Select☆A☆Game Machine that are just right for the season. Heat up a cup of steaming cider, lean back in your easy chair, and relax with sports in miniature. You'll almost hear the crowds roaring and the cheerleaders urging the team to victory, as you play these mighty midgets.

The Entex Select☆A☆Game Machine is a programmable mini-arcade designed for one or two gamers, playable against the computer or head-to-head. A variety of cartridges are available for this tiny system. First master **Space Invaders 2,** *which comes* packed with the unit. Then try your hand at **Baseball 4, Pinball, Basketball 3,** *or* **Football 4.** *Each cartridge comes packed with its own colorful overlay for the playfield, to provide the characteristics for the specific game.*

Select☆A☆Game uses a 3½-in. by 4-in. fluorescent screen, and each gamer uses a bank of seven buttons to control the action, though not all the buttons are needed in every game. The screen features two-color displays, and digital scoring tracks each player's tally. This modestly priced unit ($65) allows arcaders to enjoy the variety of a programmable master component without tying up the family's TV screen, and produces an unexpectedly high level of challenge. The games are more complex than one would guess when eyeballing the tiny machine. They pack a powerful punch despite their diminutive size.

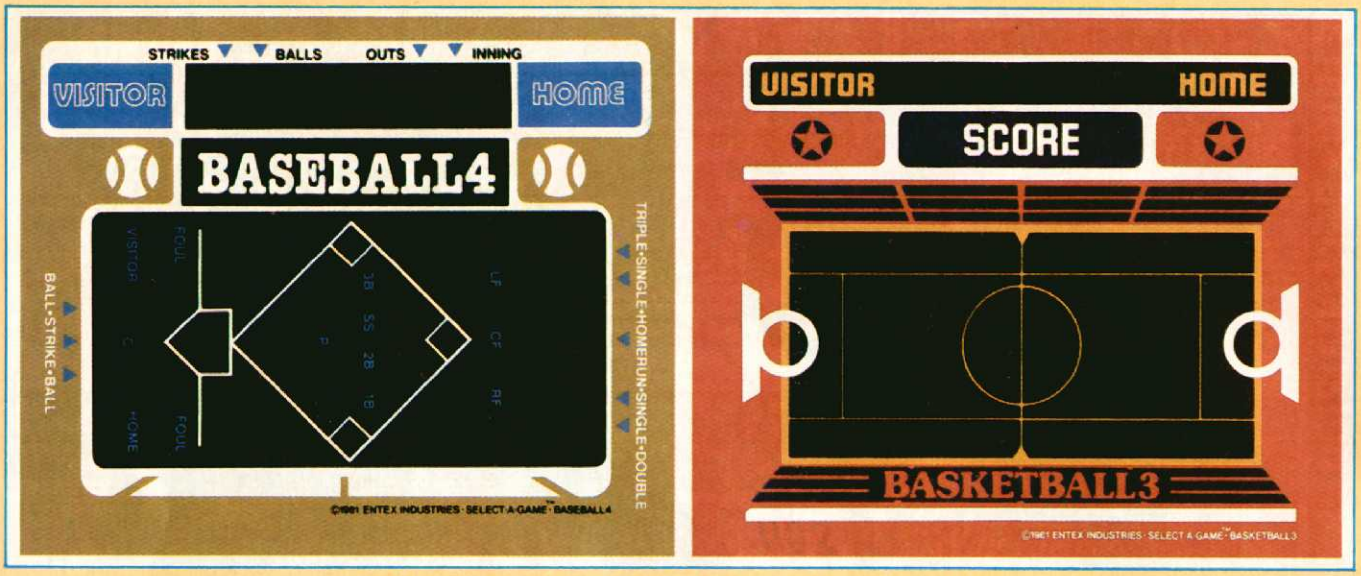
ENTEX SELECT☆A☆GAME MACHINE

Football 4 Cartridge

Select☆A☆Game Machine/Entex/$18

Football 4 duplicates many of the offensive and defensive play options of professional football. The playing field represents a 10-yard section of the 100-yard field, with five individual lanes, and moves electronically back and forth with the action over the entire length of the playing field. Each movement of a player represents a two-yard gain or loss, or one lateral lane change. When a player crosses the end of the display, he reappears at the opposite end to continue the game. The scoring display indicates the status of the game, location of the ball, score and time remaining. Players are represented by red and green blips against the inky black play screen.

The contest has four periods. Team goal locations do not change each quarter, but remain stable throughout the entire game. Each half begins with a kick-off, and every down calls for either a run, pass or kick. The gamer uses directional buttons to control one player figure, and the computer moves the other players. Successful passing



Overlays enliven Select*A*Game's Baseball and Basketball cartridges.

isn't easy; the longer the pass, the harder it is to complete. Interceptions are possible, but the ball is dead at the point of interception. The probability of kicking a field goal also varies depending on the distance of the kick. Long field goals are less likely to succeed than those attempted at closer ranges.

The game can be played with sound or mute, and a single player can choose skill level one (easiest), or skill two, which increases the speed of the computer's team. When two humans challenge one another, the skill selection is not used.

The game starts with the home team's kick. The ball travels down the field until reception is made, then its color changes. No defensive players appear on the field until the offense has run past the end yard line.

After each play, the field position, down and yards-to-go are displayed in the scoring window. The color of the player on the field indicates which team has possession of the ball. The offense decides what type of play to run, and the defense chooses the tactics to employ. The offense can run, maneuvering the ball carrier down the field while avoiding defensive players. Or the offense might decide to pass. He selects the distance of the pass (from 10 to 40 yards), then moves the receiver down the field to the correct distance from the quarterback. When he's properly positioned, release the pass by pushing button 6. If the pass is complete, the receiver continues running until tackled. The offense can attempt a field goal when within 40 yards of the goal. If successful, a kickoff is then made to the opposing team, but if unsuccessful, the ball goes to the opposing team on their 20-yard line.

At the start of each play, the defense chooses whether to defend against a running or passing play, then uses his directional buttons to get the defensive player into position to tag the ball carrier. He can try to tackle the quarterback, force incompletions, intercept the ball, or tackle the receiver after a completed pass. The defense also can try to stop the kick (rush the kicker), or block field goals, and force turnovers.

After a touchdown, the score flashes and the ball moves to the 10-yard line for the point-after-touchdown attempt. Then the ball goes to the 40-yard line for kickoff. If the offense is tackled in their own end zone, a safety occurs and two points go to the defense.

Play stops at half time. The visitor's team then kicks off to the home team to resume the second half. The end of the game is signalled by three high beep tone sequences, and the final score flashes on the display.

Football 4 is for true football fans. A dilettante won't enjoy the cartridge, because it lacks the fancy graphics of gridiron games for the bigger programmable game systems. But for the enthusiast who doesn't need pretty animation in order to understand the game, *Football 4* provides fast, varied action that will keep any pigskin fancier coming back for more. A solid winner, *Football 4* deserves to be in the Select☆A☆Game library of any arcader with a yen for a big game in a tiny package.

Basketball 3 Cartridge

Select☆A☆Game Machine/Entex/$18

Basketball 3 is a full-court, two-color game. Players control offense and defense, and the ball can be moved down the court by either dribbling or passing. The ball can be intercepted, and the opponent's players can be screened. *Basketball 3* has jump balls, turnovers, out-of-bound plays, free throws for fouls, and in-bound plays from either the sidelines or the endlines. Play head-to-head with a friend, or against the computer in the one-player mode. There are two skill levels in the solitaire mode. When two people play, there are no skill levels, but there is a handicap feature that allows the competition to be equalized if the players are of different skills.

The arcader controls the action with buttons 1 through 6. Buttons 1 through 4 control the movements of the ball handler and directs all passes. Button 5 shoots the ball, and button 6 passes it.

The game commences with a short melody, then two players appear in center court, ready for the jump ball. The first gamer to press button 5 gets possession of the ball behind the end line of his backcourt. When playing solitaire, the computer wins the ball if the player doesn't push button 5 within three seconds after the display is initiated.

There are always four players on the court. A steadily lit dot represents the ball handler on offense, and the opposing team is shown by a flickering light, representing a player who can go anywhere on the court when control-

led by the directional buttons. Two defensive guards are represented by steady lights. They are computer-controlled, and appear in random positions.

If any team holds the ball for three seconds without moving it, turnover occurs. The ball can then be inbounded from behind the baseline or from either sideline, with a straight or diagonal pass. The directional buttons control dribbling, one space for each press of a button. But be careful, for if the player moves out-of-bounds or runs into a defensive player, the ball is awarded to the opposing side.

Press button 6 to pass. The ball disappears. Continue to hold the button down while maneuvering the directional buttons. When you release passing button 6, the ball reappears where it has been thrown. Continue to dribble the ball, or try for the hoop. If the ball doesn't move in three seconds, turnover will automatically occur.

You can only shoot a basket from your own forecourt, and the probability of making the point varies with your man's distance from the hoop. Make the basket and lights flash behind the backboard while a short victory melody plays. Then the opposing team gets possession of the ball.

If a defensive player runs into an offensive man within one-half second of an attempted shot, it's a foul. Two free throws are awarded, worth one point each. The shots have to be made within three seconds each or the opportunity to shoot is denied.

Basketball 3 has very frequent turnover of possession of the ball. It occurs whenever offensive and defensive players contact each other, or if a player fails to move in three seconds. Back-court violations and out-of-bounds errors also result in turnover.

Basketball 3 is similar to *Football 4* in that it's really a game for someone who already knows and enjoys the sport. The lack of pretty animation is probably no handicap for someone who thoroughly understands the action, and the excitement of the on-screen play makes up for the visual shortcomings. It's not easy to cram a big game like basketball into a tiny cartridge, but Select☆A☆Vision's *Basketball 3* provides much of the thrill of the sport, with none of the sweat.

That's it for this issue. Watch for upcoming installments featuring Vectrex and Adventure-Vision cartridges in the next few months, when we review some of their latest creations.

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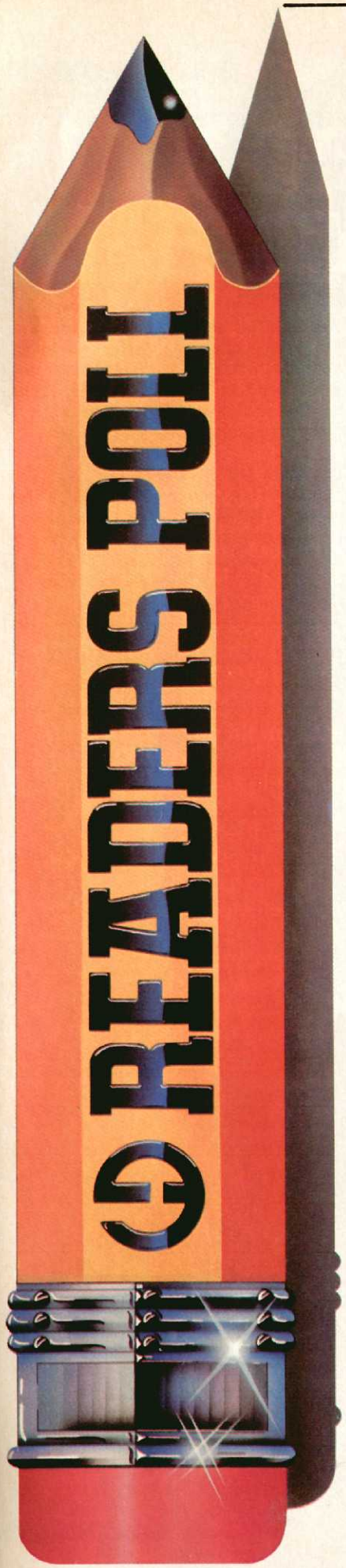

Interaction between the readers and editors of **Electronic Games** helps make this a better magazine. The more we here at **EG** know about who you are and what you want to read, the better we can satisfy your needs and desires. That's why we run a Reader Poll in every single issue of this magazine. Rest assured that even though we protect the anonymity of every respondent to our survey, the editor personally reads each and every ballot received. And of course, this is also your ballot for casting your vote for the most popular videogames, computer game programs and coin-op arcade machines.

Please return this poll sheet—or a photocopy, if you prefer to keep your **Electronic Games** in perfect condition—to: **Electronic Games**, 235 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10003.

SEX AND AGE:
☐ Male ☐ Female Age _____

MARITAL STATUS:
☐ Single ☐ Married

HOUSEHOLD INCOME:
☐ Under $5000 ☐ $5000-999
☐ $10,000- 14,999
☐ $15,000- 19,999
☐ $20,000- 24,999 ☐ $25,000+

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD: _____

AGES:
☐ Under 2 ☐ 3-5
☐ 6-11 ☐ 12-17

Please check off the equipment which you own or plan to buy within the next 12 months:

	Own	Plan to Buy
Atari VCS	___	___
Intellivision	___	___
ColecoVision	___	___
Odyssey²	___	___
Atari 5200	___	___
Other Videogame System	___	___
VIC-20	___	___
Atari 400/800	___	___
IBM Personal Computer	___	___
Apple II	___	___
Other Microcomputer	___	___
Video Cassette Recorder	___	___
Videodisc Player	___	___
Giant Screen Television	___	___
Stereo System	___	___

How many hours per week do you spend playing various electronic games:

☐ Less than 2 hours ☐ 2-5 hours ☐ 6-10 hours ☐ More than 10 hours

How much do you spend per week on electronic games:

☐ Under $2 ☐ $2-5 ☐ $6-10 ☐ Over $10

How many people, besides yourself will read this issue of Electronic Games: _____

My favorite videogame cartridges are:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My favorite microcomputer games are:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My favorite coin-op games are:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

COMING NEXT IN electronic GAMES

THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO FANTASY GAMES

The super-technology of today—the science found behind videogames and computers—can open the doors to countless worlds of wonder. Find out everything you need to know about the best games featuring swords and sorcery and digital dragons.

CONTROLLER UPDATE, PART II

The first installment of this series examined the first batch of gourmet controllers. Now, there are even *more* clamoring for your attention. Find out which will boost your score, and which are likely to break apart in your hands during a crucial play-session.

CLOSET CLASSICS OF THE COIN-OP WORLD

For every **Pac-Man** or **Joust** that attains the status of a pay-for-play superhit, there are dozens of machines that are born, live, and die in a matter of months. Some of these games probably didn't deserve their fate. Find out which ones are worth a second look in the June issue of **Electronic Games.**

GAMES BY PHONE

"Reach out and play someone" is the motto of GameLine, a service that gives home arcaders access to an entire library of Atari 2600-compatible cartridges. And the best part: **EG** readers can be the first in the nation to try it out!

There'll be plenty of other exciting articles and features of interest to arcaders, plus these regular columns:

- ★ Passport to Adventure
- ★ Q&A
- ★ Inside Gaming
- ★ Arcade America
- ★ Computer Gaming
- ★ Programmable Parade
- ★ Switch On!
- ★ Test Lab
- ★ EG Hotline
- ★ Readers Replay
- ★ New Products
- ★ Games Library
- ★ Stand-Alone Scene
- ★ Mini-Arcade Gallery
- ★ Coin-Op Classroom
- ★ Strategy Session
- ★ Insert Coin Here
- ★ Pinball Palace

So watch for the exciting JUNE issue of ELECTRONIC GAMES On Sale May 10, 1983

THE ODYSSEY HOME ARCADE CENTER.

WIN ONE FOR THE TURTLE.

Win one of 50 Odyssey Home Arcade Centers! All you have to do is go to the Odyssey® Dealer nearest you and fill out the entry form. You can win one of 50 giant, six-foot-tall Odyssey Home Arcade Centers. And each one includes a big 19-inch color TV screen, Odyssey keyboard, twin eight-position joysticks and, of course, a TURTLES™ game.

You could bring real arcade action into your home by just entering the contest. And speaking of arcade action...

Play TURTLES, the hit arcade game on Odyssey. TURTLES is part maze game, part shell game and all action.

The goal is to guide the mother turtle to hidden baby turtlets without getting "bugged" by the beetles chasing her.

For one or more players, TURTLES features eight different challenge levels plus high digital scoring with memory. And exciting sound effects when played with the Voice of Odyssey.®

Win an Odyssey Home Arcade Center and play TURTLES and all of the over 50 other great Odyssey games.

It's a combination that's hard to beat... but easy to win.

ODYSSEY

No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited by law. Entries must be submitted no later than 6/30/83. See your dealer for contest details or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: ODYSSEY Home Arcade, P.O. Box 6950, Knoxville, TN 37914. Winners list available after 8/1/83.

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Games you can take home to your mummy.

Available in disk, cassette and cartridge for the Atari 400/800 computers. These and other titles available soon for the Commodore 64, the VIC-20, TI-99/4A, Apple II, Radio Shack Color Computer, and IBM-PC.

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